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GLOUCESTER, MASS.

Interviews by

JOINT FISHERIES COMMISSION.

November, 1893.

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Interviewed by William Brewster, Richard Rathbun and
Hugh M. Smith November 15, 1893

Capt. Frank Foster, Gloucester.

47 years old. Has been mackerel fishing since he was 16 years old. Master of vessel for 22 years. Is interested in only one vessel at present, ^{Sch.} Minerva, of Gloucester. Has built 5 or 6 vessels for this fishing.

① Q. Do different size mackerel go in the same school, as a rule?

② There are some schools in which they don't vary an inch, other schools will vary from as long as your finger to 16 or 18 inches.

③ Q. Do fish run together mostly of one size and grow up together?

④ Some schools remain together, but of course there are cases where there are all sizes from the smallest to the largest.

⑤ Q. Is it not a difficult matter to tell how fast the fish grow?

⑨ They go away in the fall and come back in the spring. After leaving here in the fall they do not grow any until they come back in the spring. They grow when they are on the coast, for the reason that they do their feeding there. After going away from
When they return ^{in the spring} there is not a particle of flesh or fat on them. On holding them up you can see the light of day through them.

⑩ Were many small mackerel seen last spring, and would it not have been better not to have touched those mackerel?

⑪ I think all they landed would not make a drop in a bucket. Only 3 or 4 vessels got any at all. Those were mackerel which had spawned the year before, and $\frac{3}{4}$ of them would go right through the meshes of the net.

⑨ Q. How large do they grow in a year?

⑩ About ~~one~~ an inch. Mackerel grow rapidly, only to a certain size, I suppose somewhere from 15 to 16 inches long.

⑪ Q. What is the largest mackerel you have ever seen?

⑫ I think 23 inches. I think we got one of that size this spring, which was a very large mackerel. Mr. Church got 400 bbls. of very large fish one time with his steamer. This was fishing about Block Island. Those large fish are there every year. They would lay right across a bbl. Would each go to a bbl. of 200 lbs. Late in the year were very fat. Have not seen any big fish for 2 years. In 1886 we were out there and got 100 bbls in one morning.

⑬ Q. How large were they?

⑭ I do not know exactly. Should

say from 14 to 18 or 19 inches long.

Packed in bbl. took 160 to 180 for No. 1,
130 for extras.

(D) Q. How did you catch them?

(H) In the seine. It was in the last
of Oct. They showed up better than
than ^{at} any other time.

Q. What is the average size of mackerel
taken with the purse seine? What will
they weigh on an average?

That is a pretty hard question to
answer. I should say they would
measure between six inch, little tinker
mackerel, and 14 inch mackerel. We
catch more No. 1st, 2nd and 3rd than we
do larger size fish.

Q. What is the smallest size mackerel
seen schooling in the fall, after they are
hatched in the spring?

5½ or 6 inches. Could get 132
in a common water pan — generally
would not fill it.

Q. What was the size of those small

mackerel last spring?

They were from 7 to 9 inches, possibly, on an average.

Q. Were those year old mackerel?

Yes, they were year old.

Q. Do you find as many large mackerel now as you used to?

More large mackerel this fall than there has been since I have been going fishing. The general percentage this year is large mackerel altogether.

Q. How far south have you taken mackerel this year?

Just as far as I have gone. (Capt Adams has record of farthest south taken by Capt Foster).

Q. When fish are schooling do you always find scattering fish on the surface?

Yes, indeed, always find scattering fish. Will always see them on the

coast anywhere. Light vessels catch these scattering fish.

Q. Do you follow schools any distance?

Oh, no; but would follow a body of fish. Would follow them along, perhaps 10 miles from the shore. Would follow them clear to the south as far as we go. Do not follow any one school that we know of.

Q. How far have you followed a body of fish?

We follow them from as far south as we find them to as far to the north as we go. They go to the head of the Bay of Fundy. Fish which approach the coast of N.J. go up the bay and into the Gulf of St Lawrence. Fish on this coast do not go into the Bay of St Lawrence.

Q. You find, possibly, that the fish which go into the Gulf of St Lawrence

might approach the coast there near the mouth of the Gulf?

Yes. A little further to the north. We have no proof of this more than that we do not find them anywhere else.

Q. Are mackerel thin when first seen?

Yes, indeed, not a particle of fat on them.

Q. When are fish first seen off the coast of Nova Scotia generally?

The 5th of May is the earliest I know of. They are then fat.

Q. They have not begun to fatten up at the south?

No, never find any mackerel south with any fat on them in the spring. Cannot tell the males from the females when in the water.

Q. How far north have you fished for mackerel? Run in the Gulf St Lawrence. Went

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up as far as the Magdalen Isds., and
Miramichi,
up the ~~Miramichi~~:

Q. How early can you fish up there
successfully?

Well I do not know. I never was
there early. Never attempted to go there early.
Do not generally go around north of Cape
Breton in the spring. Capt. Sol Franks
got 200 lbs. at Cape North in June.
Last spring were 30 sails or more around
near Cape Breton in the Gulf of St. Lawrence.

Q. Has there been any change in the fish,
as to the size or movements of the schools?

Well no, nothing more than some
years they are more plentiful than others.

Q. You do not see any great difference?
No, indeed,

Q. That is to say, you might ^{now} find fish
schooling in the same way; schools of
the same size, and fish of the same size;

now that you'd 20 or 30 years ago,
Yes, indeed. I will illustrate this
~~just~~ by ~~this~~ one instance; We were
south; plenty of fish. All at once they
disappeared and we never knew where
they went to. We never found them
again. Have searched the coast for
several months and never found anything,
until the first thing we know, they
come rushing on the coast, all along
from ~~Mackinac~~^{Mackinaw} to Cape Cod.

Q. If these schools of fish that come
onto the coasts of Virginia and New
Jersey do not go into the Gulf of St.
Lawrence, where do they go?

They come on this coast first. They
came on this coast this summer, and
went as far as above Grand Manan,
more than they have known for many
years. We do not know where they

went to. Good schools of mackerel around Cape Cod, off Block Island and Vineyard Haven. They stay through the whole summer. Large schools. We went up there quite late and got 200 bbls. Raised them anywhere. Leave Cape Cod 1st of nov.

Q. There is still some fishing there?

Oh yes, there is fish always, but they do not seem to be in schools at this season. They catch them now in traps and in nets at Cape Cod. No sailors on the coast now. They catch them in traps until Christmas; that is scattering fish, in small quantities. There are vessels yet on the Nova Scotia coast. Mackerel always follow ~~the~~ ^{Coming} coast ~~out of the bay~~ up along the Nova Scotia coast.

Q. What time of year is that?

About this season (Nov 18) there would be no fish in the bay of Fundy at this season, that I know of.

Q. What seems to become of that school of fish they are now catching on the Nova Scotia shore?

~~They never go up the Gulf from the shore at all.~~ When the season comes for them to come in on the coast, they come in. Think they go into the gulf stream; that is, all those that strike the other side of Cape Sable, but our fish that strike up along this coast come in on the coast this side, and stay here.

Q. Are those fish going out through the Straits of Canso, going out and disappearing, in schools?

Yes.

Q. Do the fish that go up ~~the~~ ^{by} river now

July ~~2~~¹ lesson by 7 of 1900.

There were

Q How far south do the fish go and
in the fall?

I never knew them to come so far
south than Block Island, I suppose
principally on account of the weather.
So on account of the weather that they
never get far down after they get
that far.

Q Do you find as large schools
the fall as in the spring?

Yes frequently larger.

Q Do you know of persons who have
seen the fish south of Block Island
in the fall?

Yes, indeed, one of my men who
has been with me for two years, goes
south every winter. He went out on
the last of Macon, I think, and

he said the likes he never saw before in the way of mackerel. They seemed to be right in a body. About 55 miles S. S. W. from Block Island. We could not go there this fall.

Q. They used to fish off the Vineyard, yes indeed, but not very recently.

Q. Do you ever find mackerel during the winter?

There are none found during the winter after December that I know of. I do not think small mackerel go south as far as the big ones.

Never knew of mackerel being found in the stomachs of other fishes during the winter. In winter these fish go off in the edge of the gulf stream, in warm water. Stay on the bottom. will tell you my reasons for thinking so. There are

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plenty of vessels go across the gulf stream, and often men go who have been fishing all their lives. If they saw a school of mackerel from the deck, they would report it. Hundreds of vessels cross that stream, and do not see them.

Q. Do the schools strike the upper parts of the coast with regularity from year to year?

That is a pretty hard question to answer. It is a difficult matter to strike those fish exactly when they strike the coast. Might have bad weather for a week and not see ~~them~~^{any.}. We expect to meet them when they first come out of the gulf, somewhere along about the first of march. Mackerel occur anywhere about the coast at certain seasons.

Q. There is no particular place where they never occur?

None that I know of.

Q. You may find them around Georges.
Oh yes.

Q. Which is the biggest mackerel region on our coast, including Canada?

I should say on our coast that the Bay of Fundy has the greatest quantity; at any time. When a large body of fish come from the south they generally go to the Bay of Fundy.

Q. How far off shore have you seen mackerel?

It is always inside of the gulf stream. Never saw them off more than 60 miles.

Q. What do you consider the Bay of Fundy, that part north of Grand manan?

I call anything the Bay of Fundy inside of the Seal Islands and Matinicus.

Q Would you expect to find mackerel 60 miles off shore in the Bay of Fundy?

Oh yes. In the year 1882 was the greatest year we ever knew in the Bay of Fundy.

Q How far from shore is the best fishing?

It is anywhere.

Q You do ~~not~~ know anything about the temperature of the water?

No sir.

Q At what distance off shore would you see the bulk of the fish? ~~as they~~ seem to move up as they go in shore,

No.

Q Do the ~~the~~ schools go inshore at all?
Yes indeed, there has been a very

goodfishery this year close in.

Q. Is that the same school of fish which have gone in?

Yes indeed. But there is always more or less scattering fish. Never knew a season but what there is more or less scattering fish along shore.

Q. Do you find these same small pods off shore too?

Oh yes, very frequently.

Q. Those are not worth purse seining?

Would be if you could catch them. Have set all day long and only got 20 bbls. of fish.

Q. Are the movements of the schools affected in any way by predaceous fish?

I have seen mackerel paralyzed so with fish that you could go right up to them and pull them into the

boat.

Q. What were the fish?

They were albacore, from $3\frac{1}{2}$ to 5 feet in length.

Q. What is the movement of mackerel in the school, do they circle much?

Sometimes they circle. Sometimes you will see a dozen schools at once, sometimes 20 and 50 schools, all going around like a wheel. Not like menhaden exactly.

Q. What do the mackerel feed upon?

Several things. We call it red feed or red seed that is in the water. It is alive. They also feed on live bait, little fish. Have seen fish in mackerel that length (length of finger).

Q. Is there any difference at different times of the year? Do they feed on this red feed at all times of the year?

There are plenty of times in the year you will not find any of this red feed in the mackerel.

Q Is there any particular time of the year that they get the red feed when they are going up the coast in the spring?

Well, whenever they find it. It is not general all along the coast.

Q Do mackerel feed at the surface?

Yes, I think so. They school for nothing but that.

Q Do mackerel feed at all seasons? do they feed in spawning season?

I suppose they do.

Q The question of burning their stomachs ^{has reference to} with this red feed?

Yes, it is the red feed.

Q How long does it take to burn the stomachs out?

Sometimes could not keep them
on deck more than 5 or 6 hours.
Could not bring them in fresh very
well; not without ice. It would
affect the flesh of the fish.

Q. You do not find this food at any
particular place or season, but
may find it at any time during the
year?

Yes, at any time. The red fish
goes in schools. Find it down south
where we first strike the mackerel, and
as far north as we have gone. Plenty
of it in the Bay of Fundy.

Q. Where do the mackerel spawn?

In my judgment, they spawn
anywhere from the Delaware Break-
water to the head of the Bay of Fundy,
on this coast, and in the Gulf of
St. Lawrence. They spawn any time

from the 15th of May until the 1st of July, and sometimes later than that.

Q. Have you ever seen the spawn running from the mackerel in the water?

I never did.

Q. Do you know whether they spawn during the day or night?

No, I do not.

Q. Do you know anything about the habits of the mackerel when spawning or immediately after?

I find that the month of June is the dullest season, there is. They may be below the surface.

Q. What would happen during the months of May and June?

Yes.

Q. How rapidly do they fatten up after spawning?

Very rapidly, from the first of July, and from east to the middle of August, they get about all the fat on them then for the year, and then they remain fat until they leave the coast, not ~~then~~ ^{as} good late as a little earlier.

Q. Did you ever find any large mackerel?

No I never did. Once in a while find them without a particle of food in them. Do not find many in schools that are sick. Never see dead mackerel on the surface. They would sink.

Q. Do lamprey eels ever touch those mackerel?

No, I never saw any at the surface.

Q. What fishes feed on the mackerel?

A great many — whales, sharks, porpoise, dog fish, albacore and

bonto. Blue fish are the worst
fish in the world for mackerel.
Will bite them for mischief.

Q. Have mackerel decreased or in-
creased in abundance within the
past 20, 30 or 40 years?

That is a pretty hard question
to answer. They have been scarce
a great many years ago, and then
they will be very abundant, and
then they will decrease again so
that we will not have but a few.
There are as many on this coast
this year as I have seen since I
have been fishing.

Q. You do not think there has
been a general decrease?

No sir, I think we are liable
to see as many in 1 or 2 years
from now as we ever see.

Q. Then you would not conceive that the extensive fishing which is going on has affected their abundance?

No, not materially.

Q. Are there any years when you see the mackerel mostly small?
Yes, nearly all small some years.

Q. What does that mean; are they all small the next year?

Some years small mackerel. In 1883 all small. In 1884 no, 3^d, in great abundance; the biggest catch we have ever had since four sets lines have been in use. In 1885 we did not know where they went to. Was not so many then as there was the year before.

Q. Is there any form of fishing

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apparatus which is used in catching mackerel that is taking too many fish or destroying them in any way?

No, I do not think of anything that destroys fish to any extent.

Q. Do you think that the purse seine has any effect, — is it too destructive or not? either in the quantity caught, or ⁱⁿ breaking up the schools and frightening them from our coast?

No, I do not think it is too destructive a method of fishing. It would break up the fish more than hook and line, but do not think the purse seine breaks up the fish to a great extent. All we catch does not amount to a drop in a bucket of water compared with what there is in the ocean. In the years 1883 and 1884 there were a great many

thrown overboard. Learned over some myself. Have been sorry ever since. It was in the fall fishery.

Q ~~Do~~ ^{Do} you think there should be any regulations regarding purse seine fishing?

No, I should not regulate it in any way. It will regulate itself. Think the demand will regulate the extent of the fishery. Think they do not catch enough to supply the demand, even with all the facilities they have. Would not prohibit fishing with purse seines on Canada shore. Does not favor the close season. Thinks the fishermen made a great mistake in having it. Does not think the fish need to be protected during the spawning season. What they catch would not amount to much, comparatively speaking. Does not think the close season

of much benefit.

Q. There is no particular reason why you would prohibit purse seining for my season?

Well, we might prohibit it altogether. Might make mackerel more plenty. But now if you are going to catch any you have to use the purse seine. Caught more fish in the old days with hook and line than now; but had more men employed. They are inshore now just the same as they ever were.

Q. What is the least depth of water in which you can use the purse seine?

If the water is smooth, can use it in 10 feet. Depends somewhat on the bottom. If smooth, 4 ^{fathom} ~~feet~~; if rough 16 or 17 fathoms. Think we would all have to give up the business

on this coast if we did not use a pure sime. for the reason that we cannot make them bite, no matter how nice the bait.

Q. Where was the great region for jigging in the old days?

Along this coast and the Bay of Chaleur.

Q. Were there many vessels jigging this summer?

I think 5 went to the Gulf of St. Lawrence. I think there are as many mackerel this year as there has been at any time for the last 20 years or more. There are mackerel on this coast that we know nothing about. A great many little fish that we do not see. We do not see all the fish that pass along the coast. Some years when the season is cool or stormy

large quantities of fish will pass by below the surface.

Q. Have the fishermen done well in the Gulf of St L. the last few years.
No, they have done slim.

Q. Did you see a large body of mackerel going north this year?

The largest I ever saw.

Q. If purse seining were prohibited in the gulf would it affect you any?
It would not affect me at all because I would not go there. Ever since he can remember there has been years when fish were plenty, and years when they were very scarce. There is a large quantity of fish come on this shore this year that are spawning fish. There will be a large quantity of small fish coming from those big ones, and of course they will come here and grow up here; as

they were spawned on this shore. This large body of fish are somewhere, and we shall find them before many years. The year 1872 was a very successful one for me, and it was for a great many, and they were about all large fish. Did not see small mackerel that year. The next year was a great trinker year, and the next year 1874, was the greatest year we ever had since purse seining has been in use. Thinko they will be the same again, but they have taken another course. Have not found them. These large fish that have come on the shore this year must spawn somewhere, and I think we will see the effects of it before many years.

Q. Do any quantity go into the Gulf thro' the Gut of Canse?

I think a great many, probably.

Q. What was the advantage in getting this close season in the spring, which has continued during 5 years?

Nothing: it was a great mistake and nothing else.

Q. What did Mr Whidden suppose would be the result of the close season?

The supposed vessels would have to go into some other business during certain seasons. It was protection to the fisheries, that was his idea. Close season in the southern waters should be later than the first of June. Mackerel have not done spawning until the last of June, and often into July. All the fish they catch at the south will not hurt any body. I think there is too much legislation now against the fishermen.

Q. Are you acquainted with the minkie fishery?

Well, I have caught more or less of them ever since they have been coming. Do not know where they spawn. Do not think menhaden spawn anywhere this side of New York. The menhaden fishery is only for the people who are concerned in it. Do not want them for bait. Have used them in years past for bait, because it was the best bait we could get.

Q. What bait do you carry on board mackerel vessels now?

Blue backs, we call them. They are not the same color as the alewife. Have 17 bbls now of keyacks. They are salted. Knows there are two species of alewives.

Fresh mackerel are worth more than salt mackerel, as a general thing

Q. Was there much shore fishery for mackerel? ~~200~~

no. very little. They go off Block Island sometimes. We used to fish in 33 fathoms, and would get plenty of fish. Sol Grebs started from the fleet once, went 25 miles off shore in 60 fathoms, and came upon a body of fish; any quantity of them. He lay there until the next night, and 8 of us went out there, and went aboard his boat. He said to me, "the water is alive with fish. I am going to the Cape Shore, but will stop one more night. We worked all night long. All got more or less mackerel, but nothing to what we would have got if we could have kept them in our seines. It was not on account of their being too small, but they would go down before we could get the purse together.

Q. Don't you fish at night?

Oh yes.

Q. Why don't you take them then?

That is something I cannot tell you. They would go right down and come up on the other side of our ~~seine~~, and away they would go, 200 and 200 hbls. in a school, but away they would go. Would have them in the seine one minute, and the next minute they would not be there. Thinks the steam ~~boat~~^{not} ^{however} gives some advantage. As quick as you put a light aloft you scare the fish, that is mackerel. And should you take it down and meet with an accident you would be liable to be tried for your life.

Q. What is the advantage of ^{having} a steam, is it to approach the schools more quickly?

Yes. And you can also purse the seine quicker.

Q. Is the steam launch obliged to have a light up ~~atop~~ aloft?

Yes.

Q. Do mackerel school better in the dark or in the moonlight?

You cannot get them at all in the moonlight. A school of fish on a dark night with plenty of fire show just as white as a piece of marble.

Q. Is the fleet of mackerel fishermen likely to increase?

not unless the business increases. There is nothing that has happened this year that would cause them to increase next year. If mackerel should come on the coast very abundantly the fleet would increase.

Q. Which is the best vessel fishery on the ^{part of the} coast; which is supposed to pay the best?

Nothing will pay better than mackerel, when they are here. ~~Hake~~
~~are sold as hake.~~

Gloucester, Mass.

Capt. Russell D. Terry

Interviewed by W. G. Brewster and Hugh H. Smith
Nov. 18, 1883.

Aged 52. Has had 42 years

experience as a fisherman. Has been
in the mackerel fishing most every
season up to the present. Name
of vessel, ^{schooner} Centennial.

Did not go south for mackerel
this year. Has always been south
before. Has found mackerel about
40 or 50 miles south of Cape
Henry, about 40 miles off shore.

Has been on the ground south sometime before seeing the fish, - sometimes 10 days before we saw them. When we did see them they were heading N. N. E. as a general thing. Has seen them in as close as a mile from land, and, again, off 30 or 40 miles.

Generally follow them until they get up to Cape Cod, off Block Island. They love the fish there, and that ends that voyage. (¶) They generally

strike them then in the Bay of Fundy.

The fish strike through the South Channel down to the Bay of Fundy.

I have seen fish south of Georges.

They appear to remain there, but some say they pass down to the Cape Shore.
See fish south every year that go on

Georges and do not strike this coast at all. They mackerel have a very regular course. They strike anywhere from close in to 30 or 40 miles off.

7) Shore early fish are very poor. They
are full of spawn. Has seen the
spawn run out of them quite freely
when on deck of vessel. That would
be along about May. When they
first strike the shore they are full
of spawn. Are full of it about
the middle of May. Generally
have the spawn in them until we
leave them. The fish on the Cape
Shore also have the spawn in them.

¶ They fit for the Cape Shore along about the 25th of May. Find fish on the shore for 2 months, but only fish there about 10 days. Some of these fish go through Canso - lots of them. Has never seen schools there, but has seen people that have caught them there. Some of them come out through Canso in the fall also.

¶ Has followed fish in the fall as far south as about 15 or 20 miles off

Chatham. Leave the fish there on account of the weather. Might catch them later if the weather permitted.

Catch them off Chatham sometimes as late as the 25th of November.

Those fish, we presume, come from the Bay of Fundy, but cannot say for certain. I has never caught mackerel in the winter. Never knew anyone on the coast to take them then. Along about the 4th of November they

are supposed to be done schooling.

When he was a boy, about 40 years ago, used to fish off Cape Cod the 25th of November, but now do not go much longer than the 25th of October.

9) Mackerel feed upon different things. Assume they feed on sun-squalls, sometimes hitt, and various things. We find these things in them.

Sometimes come across a school with this cayenne in them. It will poison

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your hands when you take out the
minnows. I marked average about
the same size as they did 2 years ago.
Some years larger, some years smaller,
^A Does not notice any difference in the
habits or movements of mackerel. Since
the seining began they school a good
deal more than they did before. Does
not know that they can catch them
quite as easy in the seines now as they
used to when they first went seine

in fishing, but does not think there
is much difference. I was on a voyage
a number of years ago off Block Island
when they would leave all day until
4 or 5 o'clock in the afternoon and
would not catch a fish, and then
probably within an hour every vessel
would catch a school. The spring
fish are harder to catch than the
fall fish. Spring fish are most
always running, and summer fish are

(1)

lying out. Fish are more easily caught about the time of spawning than at other times, he thinks. Has never noticed that they lose the fish about the time of spawning. Fish are governed a good deal by the tide in schooling, and also by the weather. Has not seen, for the last 5 or 6 years, no part as many mackerel as they did 20 years ago. Does not know what has become of them. -

whether they have taken a different route,
or what, — they do not appear to care
on the coast. Does not think they
have been caught up. Does not
think they catch a thousandth part
of the mackerel that come along in
the spring. Has seen some days,
more mackerel, apparently, than the
vessels caught during the whole year.
Does not think there was any benefit
in the close time law. It was passed

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to help the mackerel, and as a general
thing the southern fishing was not a
paying business. I used to do
better on an average, when they were
hooking than they do scaring. The
whole fleet used to make a better
average on the whole. Forty years
ago there was more mackerel fishing
carried on at Cape Cod than there
has been for the last 15 or 20 years.
When he was a boy there were three

firms running there, and from 8 to 10 men
in each firm, and most always engaged
in the mackerel business, but not there
is no fishing there at all, hardly.
They used to share more evenly hooking
than they do sewing. One year, about
30 years ago, we had a bad year hooking,
but as a general thing they averaged about
the same. The vessels expected to make
a good voyage every year. Used to carry
15 men hooking. Vessels were about

40 to 50 tons. The cost to fit out a
vessel for hooking - for the fishing
gear, - was not more than \$10. or \$15.

Now it costs to fit a vessel for sining
about \$2,500.; that is for a new outfit.

The general opinion of the fishermen
was that the close time law did not do
any good. Does not think a man of
them would like to see it renewed.

Do not like anything that is
compulsory. Like more freedom.

Does not think there should be any regulations, as far as the east fishing is concerned. Thinks the mackerel will come back in time. 16 years ago, the fishing was very good, and he thought the next season was going to be a good one, so he went to work and built a new vessel; and the result was, when the season came around it was a failure, and was a failure for 2 or 3 years, and they thought there

would be no fishing, but they come again
more plenty than ever; and we have
those spells all along. ^D Does not
think the introduction of the pine
seine has been a good thing. Think
it has been an injury to the fishing
community at large. Does not know
whether it decreases the quantity of fish
or not - may possibly. Do not
catch as many fish with the pine
seine as we used to in the old days.

In the year 1831 more fish caught than at any time since. They used to catch from 1400 to 1500 barrels on the hook in a good vessel. Have shand as high as \$500. a man on the hook. Thinks if they should remove the pure seems there would be a good many men abandon the business. Does not think they could catch as many fish with the hook and line as they did formerly, for the reason that

the fish seem to have forgotten how
to bite. Thinks the fish would
come back again if they all went
hooking. Thinks, in that case, a
large number would be benefitted
by it than are to-day. Lots of boys
who are not large enough and strong
enough to handle the seine could
catch them with the hook, - and old
men also. Once seines threw a good
many old men and boys out of employment.

They want men now about from 18 to 45.
For sealing you want a good active crew
and a smart sailing vessel.

Did not catch enough fish south
this year to eat. His vessel was gone
about 2 months and got only 47 bbls.
When he was a boy used to start
south about the 10th of May, some-
times not until the 20th. Used to
make 2 trips in those days, and get
about from 150 to 300 barrels a trip.

The second trip would be about the 4th of July. Used to fish part of the time, and come in and get our toll back, and circle around on the southern end of Georges and go home; then went to the Bay of Fundy. (4) Never saw a purse seine south until about 15 years ago. The seine fishing in the spring on the Cape Shore, began about 8 or 10 years ago. Now some of the best fishing done there.

(21)

Formerly never used to go there. Never used to think of going to the Cape Shore.

Gloucester, Mass.

Capt. John J. Pentacost,

Interviewed by William Haskham and Hugh M. Smith,
Nov. 18, 1893.

Aged 47. Has had 27 years

experience as a fisherman. A great
part of that time in the mackerel

fishing. Name of vessel, ^{Schooner} Mystery.

Did not go mackerel fishing in her

this year. Went fishing for mackerel

but went in the Marguerite Hawk

Has been master of a vessel mackerel

fishing 5 or 6 years. In 1872 was

master of a vessel mackerel fishing

C

in the North Bay. Was in the Tidewater

Scud.

Used to go south to get mackerel
a good deal. Generally looked for
the fish off the caps of Virginia,
about 35 or 40 miles off shore. Run
down thru the 1st of April. Look
for them about that time. Has been
winds go thru earlier, but did not get
many fish. Has been thru before
fish were caught there. ⑨) Does not

know what direction they come from
when he meets them. They are generally
heading about N. N. E. ⁹⁾ Has followed
those spring bodies from off the coast
of Virginia clear to Gaspe. Has
never been to the 7 Islands. ⁹⁾ The
further north the fish get on our
coast the nearer they come in shore.
Never look for fish within 6 or 7
miles of land along southward of
Delaware, and often they get up by

Bungett and New York, catch them
within a mile of land. ^P Spring
mackerel go south of Georges.

Strike about Cape Sable. The
fish strike the Nova Scotia shore
before we get them in the Bay of
Fundy, about the 10th to 15th of
May, begin to catch scattering ones
along about Cape Sable. Do not
catch many fish on the Cape Shore
until the first of June. Get them

night along the shore. They then turn
come to the south of Georges Island
the Cape and follow the shore down.
Schools split at the Cape and go in
two separate bodies. No difference
in the size of these bodies of fish.
One day get 17 and 18 inch mackerel
and another day, night in the same
place, 10, to 13 inch. The earliest
fish are the largest. Will find
large bodies of these small mackerel,

labeled not all as many as usual
this spring. ♀ The fish this spring
at the south were in deeper water than
I have ever known them to be, - in
60 and 70 fathoms of water. ♀ The
fish south this spring did not seem
to be so very shy, but they were
scarcer; were not so many schools.
♀ When we find these fish at the south
they are poor and full of spawn.
The spawn seems not to be very

far advanced, but it gets up all the time. The last fish caught were sometimes the spawners running right out of them. The last we got this spring about 70 miles from Barnegat, had ripe spawn in them. That was about the 15th or 16th of May. The spawn would run from them when we threw them on the deck. They were most all male fish. Were full of milk. [¶] The first fish

we caught this year were off Block Head, the 1st or 2nd of June. He followed mackerel in the fall no further than Block Island. None of our men go any further than that. Does not know why they give up the fishing at Block Id. then, except that it is getting late and the weather bad, and do not find but few fish. Give up mackerel fishing on this shore about

the 15th of November. How can he
then up to about Thanksgiving, and
at Brewster Harbor nearly as late
as Christmas. If Mackie take
the same course when leaving the
coast that they do when coming on
the coast. The only difference he
can notice in the habits of mackerel
since he has been fishing is that
they do not take the hook as they
used to. Occasionally try them with

the hook. When we used to go to
the Bay, left here in June. Has
been in the Bay in 1863, on the 11th
of June, and caught a barrel of
mackerel himself off North Cape,
P. E. I., but then the fleet used to
go in the Bay early, and would get
to heaving lots of bait. Probably
the heaving of so much bait has a
tendency to stop the fish. Now there
is so little bait that they do not pay

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any attention to it; at least they do not
bite as they used to. I Does not think the
Bay mackerel spawn as early as they do on
this shore. Thinks they keep going until
they get ready to spawn, and whenever they
are at that time, there they stop and spawn.
None of the fish they catch on their early
spring voyage have spawned. Some of
them are as fat as any we catch during
the year. They are barren fish. Only
get a very few of such fish. Thinks

they spawn in the Bay about the last of June. ⁹⁾ Gonnally get to the Cape Shore about the 1st of June. The best fishing on the Cape Shore is from the 1st to the 10th of June. They follow the fish as far as Cape North and there they lose them. ¹⁰⁾ pretty hard to tell about the habits of mackerel. Was master of a vessel in the Bay looking 22 years ago, and has seen it right through his life that you would have bait for

mackerel and perhaps catch half a dozen
just as fast as you could haul a line,
and then they would be gone all at once, -
quick. [¶] We call them feed cayenne,
all-eyes and sand fleas. See more
live feed now than we did 10 years ago.
In the old times when he went hand line
fishing did not see the fish schooling
so much as they do now. Has been in
the Bay and caught a number of trips
of mackerel, and never saw a school

during the whole season. Never saw
but one school at the Magdalens com-
to the surface for heaving back.

Do not notice any difference in the size
of the fish now from what they were
10 years ago. There are large and
small ones. Some years more large
fish than small ones; other years vice
versa. I never remembers fish being so
scarce on this shore as they were this
year; and they are all large fish.

Never knew them to run so large. All he
caught on the Cape Shore this year
were 1' & and 2'. Got 46 barrels in
the Bay this year, and they were all
large fish; - nearly all 1'. Those
fish we get in the Bay are hardly ever
as fat as those we get on this shore.
Sometimes get what we call "white-bellied"
fish. In the Bay get dark bellied fish.
Get both kinds at the south, both
dark and light. Get better fish

on the north side of Magdalens than on the south side. Does not know the reason. No difference in the marking between the dark fish and the light ones.

② About the spawning time thinks the fish are more logy and sluggish. No trouble to catch them then. They seem to disappear about the time they spawn. They stay down about 10 or 15 days to spawn. Some times will catch fish with half the

spawn out of them. Do not extrude the whole of their spawn at one time.

When they get through spawning and come up you will find them in small bunches; perhaps a barrel in a school. Keep increasing until they get to be a big school. When they all get through spawning they get in a big body.

⑧ Did not used to begin fishing as early as we do now. Never used to go south until along in May, and never went

so far south as we do now. Along about
the 1st or 15th of May were off New
York. I did not do any fishing on the
Cape Shore in those days; - not until
12 or 15 years ago. The heaviest
flots would leave for the Bay about
the 4th of July, but some would leave
of June. A few would go in
the Bay instead of going south.
For the last 3 or 4 years mackerel
have been scarce everywhere; that is,

nobody could find them. Mackuel were
as plenty 10 or 12 years ago on this
shore as they ever were in the memory
of anybody. Cannot account for the
decrease in their abundance, unless it
is that they have taken some other
course. Does not think too many
fish have been caught. Thinks
there are more caught now before the
spawning season than there used to be in
old times. The fish that were caught

(20)

in the Bay in hooking days had all spawned,
except the ones we caught in June.

Always a dull time in the Bay about the 10th
to 20th of July, on account of the spawning.

The hooking lasted in the Bay in those
days until about the 10th of November, and
sometimes later. I never went sailing with

the puie sun until about 1864, and
since then the fish have been as plenty
along this shore

as they were before, so does not think
it hurts them any. Thinks 1 trap or

pound is worse than 25 seines. Of course the seines break up the schools. Frequently catch every fish in a school with the seines. The traps and pounds along the shore are worse than anything else.

If they are going to do away with anything, he would do away with the traps before he would the purse seines. The traps catch the young fish as well as the big ones. I never but one or two years that they caught fish at the south

and had to throw them away. One year vessels caught small mackerel at the south (He went in the Ellen M. Adams) and took them in to New York, and then were other vessels there from the north with large ones, and we had to heave about all our fish overboard. That was about 9 or 10 years ago. Sold \$2.50 and threw the rest overboard. In those days could not sell small fish, but now can sell any kind.

I) Does not think the close season amounted to anything. Fish were no more plenty south this year than the last year we were there; if anything not so plenty. The object was, that it would be a good law to stop the vessels from going south, and they would not have to fit up any vessels for that voyage. It was not a paying voyage. That was the principal reason for passing the close law.

This law was first started in Portland, Me.
Does not think it affected the fish at
all. This spring we landed about
240 or 250 barrels at the south,
that is not salted; One time we had
about 22,000; another time 5,000
fish. Sold them all the way from
10 to 20 cents apiece. #) Would not
be in favor of regulating the price
some fisheries in any way that he
knows of. Thinks the only way to

regulate the seine fishing is for every man
to destroy his seines. Does not think
it has been any advantage to anybody,
all things considered. Some of those
men who did well hooking, when they
went to seining, lost every dollar they
had. Some gained and others lost by
the purse seine. He has done very
well with it. It is a nice way to
catch fish. They are saved in just
as good order as with the hook and

line fishing. Very seldom have any
bad fish. It is like this:— you
go out and set your seine and get 100
bands of mackerel in one school.
You have 16 or 17 men, and in 3 or 4
hours the men have these fish all
dressed. In hooking you may lay
3 or 4 hours catching them. Can
take care of fish much quicker now
than formerly. ⁹⁾ The poorest fish
that come into these markets are

caught in boats around Prince Edward Island and Magdalen Islands.

If the pure seine was given up, might possibly educate the mackerel to take the hook as they used to do; but would have to educate the fishermen also. If they would go into the Bay and haul as much bait as they used to do, 300 and 400 barrels, it would attract the attention of the fish, and they might hit like

they used to do. These men who

have always done well scirring would
not sanction anything to stop it.

Fish school just according to the
seed. If it is on top of the water, the
fish will be on top of the water.

If on the bottom, the fish will be
on the bottom.



Gloucester, Mass.

Capt. John F. Vautier
Survived by William Wetherom and Hugh M. Smith

Nov. 18, 1893,

Aged 32. Has been fishing

for 23 years. ^{Captain of Schooners} Name of Vessel

Rapid Transit, of Gloucester, 1893.

Did not go south this year. Was

~~on~~ the Banks up to September. ^(D) Has

been in the southern fishing. Was

at it for about 10 years. Got a

fair catch there every spring.

Usually struck the fish on the

southern coast about the capes of

Delaware, and a few springs got them down as far south as Cape Charles.

Find the fish 35 to 45 miles offshore there. One spring they were within 8 or 10 miles. As they got up toward New York were right close into the beach. When this school is close in shore there is another school off astern 50 or 60 miles. They are going to the eastward.

Suppose they go to the southward of Georges.

²⁾ Never followed a school

south of Georges; that is never followed them all the time. One spring found the fish at Sandy Hook, and then followed them way to the south of South Shoal Light Ship. They were bound to the southward of Georges, and if they kept on in that direction would probably strike Cape Sables and the Nova Scotia shore. When they stop fishing in the spring, leave the fish out around Block Island.

2 or 3 years found them this side of
Nantucket Shoals. One year in May
we came over the shoals and found fish
there; and worked further to the eastward
and got a school in deeper water. [¶] These
fish we get in the south spring fishing
have spawned in them. This spawn
gets ripe sometime in June. Get a
very few fish in this fishing that have
spawned. When we first catch them
in the spring do not dress them, so

cannot tell. Never salt shore fish.
Always run them on fresh. After
the 1st of May they salt them some-
times. Never make a regular practice
of it. ^DI look for fish in the Bay
of Fundy and Cape Cod Bay after the
first of June, but not much done in
the Bay of Fundy until the middle of
June. ^DI thinks some of the fish they
see in the southern fishery come on
the New England shore. ^DI thinks

mackerel spawn on this coast; some
on the Long Island coast, and from
that to the Bay of Fundy, and up as
far as they go in the Gulf.⁹⁾ Cannot
say exactly how long the southern
fishing has been carried on, but
thinks about 30 years. They did not
go down south as early 30 years ago
as they do now. When he first
began fishing, used to sail south
about the 15 to 20 of April. Reach

(7)

the grounds about the first of May.
Did not go as far south then as they do
now. Never went down there looking.
Been fishing on the Nova Scotia shore
for about 20 years. Would not be
there in the summer time. First
began to go there in the spring on the
Cape Shore 8 years ago. Other vessels
had been going there about 3 years
before that. Never went there before
that because did not know there were

fish there. Has not gone for the last three years. Always did well when he did go there. Would expect to find the fish there about the 1st of June or 2nd of May. Generally expect to find them first around Cape Sable. Has followed them as far north as Cape North. Never followed them into the Bay in the spring. Those fish had not spawned. The spawn was in them, and was ripe.

They were large fish, much all of them.

The early schools are larger fish

generally than the later schools.

That spring fishing is very short.

Over about the 15th, or 20th of June at
the outside. The fish are going

along the coast quite rapidly. They
are pretty shy at that time. Experts

says it is due to the fact that it is

getting near their spawning time.

Has followed fish in the fall no

further than the south of Block Island,
and then did not see any. The last
fish they saw was off Cape Cod.
Has never caught mackerel in the
winter. Has seen probably a dozen
when herring fishing in the Bay of
Fundy, along in January. Caught
them in the herring nets. Has never
known mackerel to be found on Weston
Bank. On the Cape Shore has not
found mackerel outside of 25 miles.

Has taken them that far off. They
were going along shore to the eastward.
Were running parallel with the shore.
Not going directly into land.

Has noticed different kinds of
fish preying upon the mackerel,
and driving the schools. Has seen
blue fish and bonitos. Saw lots
of them, this fall. They give the
mackerel a good deal of trouble.
Seem to drive them pretty fast.

Has known them to drive them close
to shore. See more on his blue
fish and bonitos every year. Find
the blue fish chasing the mackerel
most all seasons of the year on some
parts of the coast. Does not think
he ever saw them chasing the
mackerel in the spring fishing at
the south. Would find blue fish
no further north than this side of
the Bay of Fundy on the coast of Maine.

Never below Grand Maran. Has seen bonitos inside of the Seal Islands.
No difference in the size of the fish now and those caught when he first went fishing. [¶] Not much difference in the behavior of the fish. When we first went fishing there would be weeks that we would not see them schooling. [¶] Never knew fish so scarce as they have been for the last 5 years. This year

there was a large body of fish on
the coast here, but they did not
show. I ate this fall more as many
fish as he ever did. They were from
Monhegan to Monot Rock. Those
fish appeared somewhere about the
middle of September. Had not
many fish been seen along there
before that. Those large schools
of fish this year were very large
fish, nice and fat. The mackerel

they take on the southern voyage and
on the Bay Shoe are about all 3".

Occasionally find a few fat fish among

these early ones. ⁹ About the spawning ^{time} ^{PA}

every year the fish seem to go down.

They disappear in the Bay of Fundy in
the Bay Chaleur and on the New England

coast. Stay down sometimes a week

or fortnight. Some years they come

up in a body. Does not think they

will take the hook about spawning time.

He has had no experience hook and line fishing on this coast. Got a few on the hooks in the fall. Has been trolling fish up and setting seines, probably about 15 years. Got 80 barrels of mackerel one time by trolling them up with bait and then setting seines around the vessel. Thought it was a good thing to try the close time law and see if it would be any benefit. Thinks it is a little too soon to tell.

whether it has been any benefit or not.
Thinks the body of the fish on this
coast is more than 3 years old. Does
not think the law was much benefit,
because they caught the fish before
they spawned anyway. Does not
think what vessels go on the mackerel
fishing at that time of the year, but
the mackerel catch. Thinks next
year they will have a good catch of
mackerel. Does not think the present

scarcity will continue. Home had 3
poor years in succession before this.

Has no opinion as to the reason of the
scarcity. Does not think all the
fish have been caught up. Thinks
they take some other course. It is
due to some natural causes. [#] Years
ago those old folks on Newfoundland
would say mackerel were an injury to
them, there were so many. They left
that coast 15 or 20 years ago. Has

been a few fish caught there 10 or 12 years ago along the Bay St. George.

Began to get scarce then before they

did on this shore. ^{#1} 7 years ago

got 3 traps of mackerel in the Bay

Ghalew. ^{#2} Does not think the fence

wire will hurt the fish any. Does

not think it makes them wild.

Saw a school caught this summer of

about 200 barrels, on Monhegan

that were very tame. The weather

has a good deal to do with catching fish. The thicker the weather the better chance to get a school.

Used to fish some in the Gulf of St. Lawrence. Thinks the purse seine fishing is all right there. Not much been made out of the purse seine fishing of late years. Thinks if they had hung to hooks they would do better than they do now. The greater number of vessels that go and

heave bait, the more fish they will get.
Does not think the average is as good
as in old times. ⁹⁾ Does not think the
fish caught with hook and line are
in any better condition than those
taken with the pure seine. The
gill net fish do not look so well.
Does not know of any difference in the
market value between hook and line
and the pure seine fish. If the 240
barels he caught, he saved them all.

in good condition. Had caught

200 bands this year before that.

About the middle of September had

520 odd bands.

Gloucester, Mass.

Capt. John E. Garman
nived by William Wakeham, Richard Rathbone and Hugh M. Smith.
Nov. 20, 1893,

Has had 34 years experience in the mackerel fishing. Captain of Schooner Name of vessel Ambrice H. Knight, of Gloucester, Engaged in the southern mackerel fishing. This year did not go further south than the Delaware Breakwater. Has been down off Cape Henry years ago. Has taken fish down break of Cape Henry in 25 to 35 fathoms of water. Thinks they began that

extreme southern fishing about 15 or 16 years ago. That is about as early as they began to catch mackerel and run them into New York. Before that time used to go off Fire Island; that was the furthest, — might some have gone as far as New York.

D) In the beginning find the fish both in schools and scattered. In the night will see them scattered. Do not notice it in the day time. Never see

scattering fish except at night. [¶] The
course of the fish is N.E. to N.N.E. as
they work up from the southern ground.
The fish at that time are very poor;
the poorest we find them. The very
first we get are fatter than the second
schools. As they approach spawning
time they get thinner. [¶] The size of
the schools in the spring is generally
larger than what we get later. Has-
sun schools down there years ago that

4

were 3 miles long and a mile wide. Had
not been any seen for 3 weeks before that
time. This was about the 27 of April,
about 1883, off Kenwick's Island.

9) "Will tell you how we came across
them! It was before daylight in the
morning. Was called to breakfast, and
we all turned out, and I saw this rushing
in the water. I supposed it was some
other large fish, or something of that
kind, so went down to breakfast - did

not think it was mackerel; - but when I came up it was lighter, and I saw this white foam all over the water first as far as I could see, and found they were mackerel. We got 200 barrels in one set, and then set again and got another 100, and then went to market."

9) The first schools of mackerel are large, ¹⁴₁₅ about 14 to 16 inch fish. The second schools run about 11 to 12 inches.

See the second school within a week
after the first school. This year
they get the smallest one first, so
small that they market in the same.
When he gets through with the
southern fishery he follows them
up as far as abreast of New York.
Of late years do not look for them
any ~~later~~. In fact they appear
to sink or go off shore, and strike
Georges and the Cape Shore. Then

(1)

is a small inside school that strike
down off Fire Island and go around
Block Island. They leave these
schools at New York and go to Cape
Sable. The early vessels come home
and refit. No fish caught between
New York and Cape Sable that he
knows of. They see them in the nights
on the southern edge of Georges, but
they are very wild. They have tried
to catch them, but have never caught

any to his knowledge, except one trip,
at South Shoal lights ship.

¶ Has gone as far north for
mackerel as Bon Rive near Gaspe.
that is 34 years ago; - the first
time he went.

¶ Mackerel run more different sizes
the same report,
now than they did in old times; Fresh
those times would run about one size.
Now get more sizes to a school. Average
smaller now. ¶ They apparently do not

come on our shore as they used to years ago: that is on the Maine coast. They run to take more to the Nova Scotia coast and the Bay of Chaleur. The fish that go into the Gulf of St. L. go on in two schools. The first school goes in around Cape Breton, and the next school, some claim that a part of it goes through Gaspé, but he does not think that more than a scattering school goes that way.

The body of them go around the same
as the big school. ~~¶~~) The first school
is the largest. The first school goes
as far north as water goes; he supposes
as they never are seen. They must go a
long way. ~~¶~~) The second school stops
in the Bay Chaleur at Bank Orphan.
The small fish do not remain as long
as the big ones. The first school
goes in about the last week in May
and the first of June, and the second

school from the 10th to the 15th of June.
Supposes that second school is coming
out from the 1st of August up till
fall. They must be, on account of
then catching them all through the
summer, and they must come from
that way. The large fish come
out last - very late. Has never
noticed these fish going through the
Gulf of Canada in the fall. [#] Fish
leave the coast of Maine as late as

the 1st of October, and perhaps the middle of October. The fish they are getting now at Barnstable Bay, there is a question about whether they are fish from the Maine coast or fish that come up the Cape Shore, think they come from the Cape Shore. There are fish that strike in and go into the Bay Chalem that never strike south at all. Some think they come in from sea. But he thinks

that they strike to the southwest and then work up ^{around} Georges. Thinks that the fish which reach the gulf of St. Lawrence come from the south, and also the fish that come into the Bay of Fundy. There is a difference in the size of the fish that go into the Bay of Fundy. They are smaller than the ones that go into the Gulf. The offshore fish strike Nova Scotia and the interior

fish struck Cape Cod. The fish seen off shore, off Cape Henry, may go up outside of Georges and strike the Nova Scotia shore and go into the Gulf of St. Lawrence.

⑨ Has followed the fish as far south in the fall as Block Island. Does not know whether they occur on the same grounds that they do in the spring or not. Get down to Block Island about the middle of November.

I never knew of any mackerel being caught during the winter, except a few caught in the cod fish on Georges. Those are small mackerel. Caught 2 once with hadoluck on offries, on trawl. They took the bait. That was years ago. Those that are taken on Georges are young fish, and he thinks that the weather has benumbed them so that they could not get south when they were bound.

Never knew of any taken in the pounds
around here in the winter. He saw
one mackerel taken at Newfoundland
in Fortune Bay, about 4 inches long.
That was in January. Has never
heard of their being taken on the
Nova Scotia coast in the winter.
Has heard of their catching them at
Grand Manan very late. Has
heard of their catching them
there in the herring pounds. They

were stragglers and got in with the herring. I often catch schools in the summer mixed part herring and part mackerel. During the summer some mackerel are taken at times with the herring and alewives. Find shad mixed with mackerel also, a few scattering ones. Am apt to find the herring and mackerel mixed in the latter part of June, July and August. Has taken herring with the mackerel as

far south as Block Island, and has taken alewives with them as far as

Barnegat. ¶ Some places mackerel

occur more abundantly than others,

at Monhegan, Matsuicis, Mt. Desert

Rock and Bay of Fundy. There are

places where mackerel are more likely

to occur than elsewhere. They are

also as abundant in the Gulf of St.

Lawrence, at Bank Orphan, North

Cape, Bradleys, Bay Chaleur,

Magdalens, and in the spring on the Cape Shore. ⁹) The furthest offshore he has ever seen mackerel was this spring, about 75 miles offshore.

⁹) Large, predaceous fish, such as blue fish, dog fish, albacores and whales, sometimes break up the schools. They have a tendency to break them up and scatter them into small schools. But does not think they eat many of them. Has known bodies of mackerel to be

driven off by blue fish and other fish,
so as to destroy the fishing for awhile.
For instance, at Block Island, blue fish
came in there in July and chased them
away for a few days, and then they would
come back again, and they would harass
them again.

9) Often get whole schools of very
large mackerel. The first fish that
come are pretty large. Fish we got
this spring on the Cape Shore, the

first school, two-thirds of them were from
16 to 17 inches. They look for them every
year on the Cape Shore. It is the same
south. There has been a summer
school in the bays on the Cape Shore
every summer until this year. Has not
heard of any this summer. Could
catch any quantity of them until this
year. These fish that occur in the
bays do not go into the Gulf.
There are certain fish that go into the

bays on the coast of Nova Scotia, and remain there all summer. They leave about October. [¶] The little mackerel do not school as much as the big ones. They will in the fall when they are moving south, but when they are on the feeding ground they do not show as often as the big ones. [¶] Should not think there had been any decrease in the large mackerel. A school of large fish appear in the spring to be

easier to catch, but in the fall they are
harder.

9) Mackerel feed upon ~~lant~~ and red seal.

That is about all we see them feed upon.

When sailing along and we find this
feed in the water, we suppose naturally
there may be mackerel underneath the
surface. This feed does not occur
only in places. Find it in the Gulf
of St Lawrence and along the coast. This
year saw the most at Block Island.

It stand there all summer, and the fish
stand there all summer too. When
they are the feed pretty abundant, do
not always find the mackerel in the
same proportion. Never saw the
like of feed there was this summer.
At Block Island this year there
was a good school of mackerel, but
the feed appeared to be more abundant
in proportion than the mackerel.

Do not lose many fish of late years

by this feed burning their stomachs, but
if he took a ^{load} heavy deck of fish and the
feed would naturally burn their stomach.

before we could save them. It is bad
for them to have this feed in them.

If they are feeding on lant they will
last longer.

¶ In regard to their spawning:-

this year they spawned before they
got into the Bay Chaleur, but in
Cape North Bay we find the spawn

just as chick apparently as the red
sard is in the summer on this coast.

It was only mackerel spawn, - looked
just like a bank up and down the

water. That was about the 8th of
June. Thinks they spawn at Block

Island about the 1st of June. Those
other fish that strike in, strike about
the 1st of June and then work down
back of Nantucket, and spawn on
that shore. Inside of the Gulf

of St Lawrence they spawn about the
last of June; from the middle of
June to the last. ♀ When spawning
they are at the bottom, not at the
surface. They remain at the bottom
from 3 to 4 weeks. During that
time the fishing is not very good.
Can catch them up with bait sometimes.
Can sometimes catch them with
hook and line. ♂ Has caught the
early mackerel with hook and line

as readily as after the spawning season.

The early fish on the Cape Shore

will not take the hook until they

get into the Bay. Has never tried

to catch them on the Cape Shore,

but get all theirs south. Never could

raise them to catch them on the hook

there, and therefore do not try on the

Cape Shore. Fish that are bound

north to spawn will not stop to take

the hook until they get to their

journys end. ④) The Cape Shore fishery has existed about 10 years. They generally get a catch there in June. Would not start for the Gulf until the 4th of July. Would always get some fish on the Maine coast in June. Never very large catches, but would get enough to keep us here. That is the reason, he supposes, why they did not go to the Cape Shore.

Capt. Gus. Cunningham was the first

man that went to the Cape Shore.

It is about 7 years since he (Gorman) went to the Cape Shore. The fleet going to the Cape Shore increases every year.

At the Cape Shore fish are most abundant from 3 to 5 miles offshore.

Along the outer coast of Nova Scotia they keep off 3 to 5 miles, but down at the eastern end they go in to the rocks.

9) Thinks mackerel have decreased.

Of course they vary from time to time,

They have increased for the last 4 years,
but before then it was a pretty poor
catch for 2 or 3 years. No good
fishing since about 1872 until 8
years ago. But as a whole, they are
not as abundant as they were. Cannot
see any prospect of their increasing
in abundance. If they will increase,
^{we} should have had a good increase
this year. ⁹¹ Does not think we will
ever get any good fishing like we have

had as long as they are so many since.
There was an increase year before last,
and we looked for a better fishing
season this year. But there were only
200 more barrels caught this year than
last year, and had more men employed.
I think the purse seine has had an
injurious effect both as to the abundance
of fish ^{the} and breaking up the schools.
2) Would not regulate the purse seine
fishing unless it was stopped altogether.

Thinks it would be best to stop it for a number of years during the whole season.

Use hooks and bait and go as we used to do. Thinks it would give the fish time to spawn and the young fish will come around as they did before.

Thinks fish would take the bait if there was enough went into the business, as they did in old times. Thinks they do not take the hook now because there are not as many have the bait

as there used to be. Knows by
experience this summer, by laying to
and pegging, that they will come up and
bite as they used to in old times.

Was not suppose 14 of the fishermen
would be willing to have the purse
seines done away with. Would
suggest trying the experiment for 3
years. Thinks it takes 3 years
for mackerel to grow to be no. 1 fish.

⑨ Thinks pound fishing is an injury to

Would suggest that it be abolished for
the same length of time that the purse
seine is abolished. I Would not say
anything against gill nets. Total
amount of mackerel caught in miles
and pounds is not very great, - but
they take the spring fish. Gill
nets are used only a little. Only in
the spring and fall for mackerel.
But they have got the pounds now in
every corner on the Maine coast.

of course they have not made any big catches,
but those inshore fish are the spawn
fish that should be let alone. Those
pounds, - the majority of them, - on the
Maine coast are set on purpose for
mackerel. If four years ago 16,000
barrels of mackerel were caught, and he
thinks if they had let the south fishing
gates until the 1st of June for 5 years
more it would be still better. Even

though they did not catch any, the harassing
of the mackerel by the seines is just
as bad as though they caught them.

He would favor the close time law, but
they do not put the close time long
enough to cover the spawning season.

It should be until the first of July.

If they wanted have a 5 years' close time,
and have it up to the 1st of July before
seines were allowed to leave port, he
thinks in the next 5 years we would

see a difference in the mackerel. [¶]) That would shut off the Cape Shore fishing. And he thinks it should be shut off for the big fish there are full of spawn always. They are very nearly ripe, especially the large fish of the first school that comes. [¶]) The first fish caught this spring was at Beaver Harbor. During the past 3 years the first schools of mackerel have struck in about Beaver Harbor on the Nova

Sev'tra coast. The schools strike Beaver Harbor before they strike the coast lower down. Could not say whether they strike there and work down, or strike there bodily. This year when they got them at Beaver Harbor they were not at Canso, but they appeared at Canso the next day.

- In the spring mackerel travel as fast under water as they do at the surface.
- The weather has a good deal to do with

summer. They do not want rough weather, as they generally swim lower. With the mackerel in the spring it does not make any difference about the weather or anything of that sort. They always strike the Cape Shwa about the same time every year, within 2 or 3 days. The temperature of the water does not seem to have any effect on them. First get mackerel south of Cape Henry as early as the 17th

of March, and as late as the middle of April. Then they arrive at Block Isd. about the 1st of June, and at the Cape Shore about the same time. Some strike Block Island as early as the 20th of May. The first strike the Cape Shore about the 1st of June. I have known them to get mackerel at Scattered when ice has been drifting around. Mackerel swim, on the Cape Shore in the spring, about 30 or

40 miles in 24 hours. Do not go quite so fast on the southern coast in the spring; about 10 or 15 miles in 24 hours.

⑨ Spawn is up on the Cape Shore than it is at the south when we first see them. ⑨ I thinks they catch the same fish to the southward that they do on the Cape Shore. Get the same school to the south that go up on the Cape Shore. This year we thought we would leave a week before we as to.

be there when they came; and some claim
that the fish at the south do not
strike the Cape Shore; but I noticed
we had to wait for them. Is pretty
sure the fish strike south before they
strike the Cape Shore. We know
that fish are working from the Gulf of
St. Lawrence in the fall. They keep
working to the south all the time,
and the last we hear of them they
have left Cape Sable and gone south.

the fish that leave Cape Sable go the same course that they come in by.

If fish go up the Cape Shore in August or September they are likely to strike this shore. The August schools are smaller than the fall schools.

Some years get a body of fish at the Cape Shore before they do at Block Island. Do not find any body of fish at Block Island until July. This year there was the biggest body of

fish at Block Island that he has ever known of. It has been to the Magdalens for bait in the spring. Generally try to get them about the first of May.

Has heard them say they got mackerel at Magdalens about the 10th of May.

It is known that herring have been taken at the Magdalens before they appeared on the Cape Shore — Dr. Wakeham). It In years past we used to find mackerel in the Bay of

Fundy at the time we would find them on
the Cape Shore, but of late years
we do not find them in the Bay of
Fundy until we go back from the
Cape Shore. When we come back
from the Cape Shore we find them
on the eastern part of ^{Cashes} ~~Ground~~, and
those mackerel follow into the Bay of Fundy.

9) The close season law was passed
in order to let mackerel increase again.
Going south, there were lots of fish

caught and brought into New York that they could not sell. Those fish had spawn on them, and were destroyed.

That fishing as a whole was not a profitable business. 9) This year he only caught 2 mackerel in the same season in the southern fishery. The fish were there, but do not know why we could not catch them. 9) The average catch in seining will not be as large as the average catch of the hook and

and lines. If you were hooking mackerel you would have a fair average; that is, the vessels would about all fare alike.

The biggest catch he ever made with the purse seine was about 500 barrels, in the Bay Chaleur. ⁹⁾ The cost of the hook and line outfit is small; nothing compared with the cost of a seining outfit. For a good

size mackerel vessel for hook and lines, would have a crew of about 16 or 17 men, and about the same for seining. For hooking could put 20 men on a vessel, if they had real hooking.

Herring

Capt. John E. Gorman (49)

Sch. Ambrose H. Knight,

Richard Rathbun & Hugh McMillan,
Gloucester.

Nov. 20, 1893

Interviewed by Tom Waterham,

Has been down 17 or 18 years to

Newfoundland in the fall for frozen herring,

and last winter they ran smaller than

at any time since he has been there.

Doubts whether more than 40 of the

vessels brought home cargoes of large

herring. ⑩ The spring herring fishery

was very poor this year, at ~~the~~ Eastport.

As long as 24 years ago, very few

vessels would go elsewhere for their

herring. Some would go to Newfoundland

but the majority of the herring came from
Eastport. ⑩ Newfoundland fish are larger
than any others
and bring a higher price, and they are
also better for bait because there seems
to be more substance to them. They
are fatter and whiter. The Grand Manan
herring are a darker meated fish than the
Newfoundland fish. Take fish on the
muddy bottoms and they are darker
grained than others

Gloucester, Mass.

Capt. Sylvanus Smith

Owned by William Wakeham, Richard Patten and Hugh M. Smith
Nov. 20, 1893.

Born in 1819 in Rockport, Mass.

Rockport used to be a part of Gloucester

but went off in 1840. ^⑧ Beggar made head-

ing about 1840. Gave it up in

1864. Since then has been inter-

ested in the fishing business in

Gloucester. Runs from 15 to 18

vessels, all engaged in the various

kinds of ~~herring~~ fishing. Sometimes

not so engaged, and some seasons not

C

more than 2 or 3, just as the projects
appear. ^{#)} Never pursued the southern
mackerel fishery to any great extent.
Was down there one or two springs.

Went perhaps half way from Cape
Huldfin to Cape Henry. Think they
went as early as 1836 to the southern
mackerel fishery. ^{#)} Newburyport
was at one time engaged in the
southern fishery. Capt Pattengall
^{and others} of Newburyport went out 22 years

running to the southern fishing. D
used to start about the 1st of May down
about the 1st of June used to go to
the Gulf of St. Lawrence. D In the
spring the fish seemed to come in from
along off toward the gulf stream, and
would follow the shore down until
they got off Block Island. The fish
were schooling at that time, and also
found scattering ones. D His experience
was entirely hook and line fishing.

never fished any other way. ⁽²⁾ This school
of fish that struck along our shore
and around by Cape Cod, came in
on the Mass. coast, and sometimes
they stay there. The school that
went in the Gulf was another school,
that came across George. The
first they struck would be about
Cape Sable. The southern fish
^{so (?)} would stop sometimes as far east
as St. John's. Some schools would

not go further east than Cape Elizabeth.
Fourned a great deal by the season
and the feed in the water. ♀ The condition
of these early fish was not good. When
we call leather bellies, - no fat on
them. Very poor. Would begin to
fatten as soon as the spawn was out.
Spawn would be out perhaps the 1st
of July. ♀ Has followed bodies of
mackerel along for 100 or 200 miles,
as they would move east or west. Never

followed an individual school. ♂ Has been
as far north in the Gulf as you can

go. Has been up way above 7 Islands,

to Point Diamond, but never caught

many fish up there. ♀ There has been

an average decrease in the size of the

fish. With the methods of catching

fish, we catch them before they are

grown; therefore thinks the proportion

of large ones is less. The small

fish will take the hook readily.

When the fish get as big as the hook
they will take it. The present
method of fishing tends to take more
young fish than the old method of
hooking. They began on a certain
size mesh, and decreased the size.
When they decreased the size of the
mesh they had to use smaller tynes,
otherwise the seines would be too
heavy. The size of the mesh used
to be about 2 inches, and now it is

down to about $1\frac{1}{2}$ inch. The records
of nets used
can be obtained of the Gloucester
Net & Twine Co.

The vessels fishing with hook
and line in the Gulf took larger
fish than the purse seiners. Off
Block Island they fish with hook
and line, and with seines both, and
would not be able to discriminate
between the fish caught. At
Block Island caught very many bulls-

eyes this year. When mackerel are
young; no great difference ^{in price} between
common and club mackerel. The
bulldog eyes were 10 or 11 inches in
length. Were mostly No. 3.rd
Caught some less size than that.

The schools approach the coast at
different times. "In 1848 there was
a school of mackerel; ~~that~~ no such
mackerel had been seen before in the
memory of man; that came on the

wast in August, and they struck
along between here and ^{the} Isles of Shoals,
in immense quantity of them; and
they have not been seen since.

They caught just as many as they
wished of them. They were of immense
size. Would average somewhere
about 80 or 90 to a barrel. Saw
whales among them. Did not go
further north than Portland, and
went off about the 1st of November.

They followed them ~~south~~^{down} Cape Cod as far as Chatham. Do not know that they were ever seen afterward."

Mackerel never had been very scarce before that year. Were immense quantities of mackerel in the Gulf that year, but they were nothing like those described above.

The fish leave the coast in the fall and go south, perhaps the 1st of October. Some of the summer

schools will leave the Bay quite early,
about August. Has seen the large
fish there as late as November 18.

The first school of mackerel that gets
into the Bay, are caught from the
1st to the middle of May. Used to
catch them at the Magdalens about
the middle of May. These are
large fish. They go around by
Scotia. They strike the Nova
Scotia shore and follow it right

down. Will catch them along at Canoe
one night, and the next night find
them at St. Peters, and then perhaps
down further, to Lourishing and Sidney.

Will go about 30 or 40 miles in a day.

The first school of mackerel go far
north, way to the upper part of the
Bay. If there is a later school

comes in they are mostly small mackerel.

Fish come in as late as the first or
middle of July. The first school

gets in by the 1st of June, and goes
all up on the ground. ④ The smaller
mackerel are off to leave earlier. ④ Do
not think the last schools go up
beyond North Cape. Never saw them
in the upper part of the Gulf.

Thinks that small school goes up
through the Gut of Canso, and come
back the same way.

④ Fished in these waters ^(Gulf) 18 years.
Any man could not catch fish on the

hook, but would catch them in gill nets. The early fishing would be with gill nets. Would not bite the hook. Has seen 200 sail there. They were fishing at Magdalen and around Pleasant Bay. Were mostly Canadian vessels. Were fishing along the coast of Nova Scotia and the Gulf at the time of the earliest schools. This early school would not look at a hook. They school

to some extent, but seem to run down
in the water, and could not see them
readily. Could take the first
schools later with the hook, and
also the summer schools. Spawning[?]
schools will bite any time; those
~~that~~ that are not ready to spawn.
The summer schools have no spawn
in them. After the fish are done
spawning they begin to school.
They sink down when they begin to

spawn. You might try over 100 miles off ground, and would think there were no fish in the sea, and after they have cast their spawn, all at once up they come everywhere, and then they fatten up. Has been in the Bay, when apparently there were no fish there, and finally, when we began to catch them, would catch them everywhere, showing they were in the bottom spawning. Has caught

mackerel in the Gulf of St Lawrence about
the 15th of November. Fishermen of Cape
Breton say that they have seen them up to
the last of Nov. He has seen them
schooling as late as the 28th of Nov. at
Cape George. D) Those fish in the Gulf
come from the south. Fish on this
shore may go into the Gulf, but as a
usual thing, the fish that come from
the south, come sometimes from the
edge of the gulf stream, and the fish

bound to the Nova Scotia coast cross Georges
bank and strike about Cape Sable, and
then they go down the shore. ¶ The
fish that spawn in the Gulf of St.
Lawrence are very apt to return there in
 succeeding years. Some comes, as
 late in the season
 for example, cold weather and ice might
 prevent the fish from going into the
 Gulf, and turn them back on this coast.
 Used to catch the fish in the southern
 fishery to some extent with the spawn

in them, but generally when they are in spawn, do not take the hook well.

They start away from here about the 1st of May, and by the time they get here the fish were casting their spawn, and would take the hook to some extent, but they were poor fish.

Never used the gill net for the southern fishery, but simply got what he could by baiting. The southern fishery was never counted on yielding

much. #) The fleet used to leave for
the Gulf of St. Lawrence about the 1st
of June or 1st of July. The early
fleet about the 1st of June, but the
most of them about the 1st of July.

They got fair trips at that time in
the southern fishery, but it was
not a profitable business. Vessels
if they got 200 barrels, considered it
a very good trip. The average would
not be more than 100 barrels. In 1845

There was quite a large fleet went there,
from Newburyport, and more or less
from Gloucester. That was about the
height of the haddock line fishing
at the south. There were certain
numbers of vessels that went mackereling
together, and they would go south
perhaps on the early trip, and then go
to the Gulf. Another class went
to the Bank fishing. Would fit
^{form mackerel}
about the 1st of July, after they

got through their banking voyage.

They leave the coast of Maine and Mass. now about the 1st of October, and by the 1st of Nov. they are practically gone from the coast. Might some schools come along later, but not as a general thing.

They reach the Gulf of St. Lawrence later in the spring and stay later.

There may be a stray fish occasionally taken in the winter time; might catch them on the trawls when

fishing for other fish. Has been cases where they caught them among herring and other fish, and sometimes they take the trawl line. That has been off shore. Has heard of their being caught on Georges, and also on the coast of Mass., about 40 or 50 miles off. Has known of mackerel being seen on the western bank ^{or say} of the Hau, but as a general thing mackerel don't go up and down the coast, go along

perhaps 8 or 10 miles off, and from there
down along the shore. In moving
upward along the coast of Nova Scotia
they get from 10 to 15 miles off.⁽⁷⁾ Fish
taken on the bottom in the winter are
just stray ones. ⁽⁸⁾ Has heard vessels
speak of seeing mackerel in the latter
part of the winter, probably in February,
on the inner edge of the gulf stream,
as far south sometimes as Florida.
Thinks they go out until they strike the

high temperature of water, and there they spend the winter, as a general thing. Does not think they feed much during the winter. Thinks the 6 inch mackerel which appear on the coast, come back next year with another year's growth on them; and they go away again and we find another year's growth on them when they come back again. But thinks they grow on the shore during the summer, and do not grow much in

the winter. Five years' growth makes a good fish, about 12 to 13 inches in length.

④) Mackerel are likely to ~~come~~ ^{be} anywhere along our coast from the capes of Virginia northward. They may be found any day of the season at any place along the coast. May be in one place this year and somewhere else another year. No particular place where the fish become more abundant than at others. Some seasons they may be most abundant

in one place, and another season in another.
In the Gulf there are certain places where
at certain seasons they are more likely
to be abundant. 4) There are particular
times when the fish are off shore. Late
in October down around Cape Breton shore
is the best place to look for mackerel.
Would not go there much in July for
them. Would be around Marguerite.
The last few years there have been schools
of fish all the time around Block Island.

Have been caught there all summer until late
in the fall. Thinks there is a school of
fish which stays there. They are mixed -
some large and some small. ^④ Bullseyes
not caught to any extent north of
Block Island. ^④ Never catch mackerel
over 60 or 70 miles off on shore.
They catch them in the middle of the
Gulf of St. Lawrence. ^④ Did not do
much fishing on the Cape Shore in
his time. Never much done thru previous

8-10 years ago. They would not take the
hook there at that place. Used to see
them there, however. Does not know
why the purse seiners did not go there,
except that they had not got in the way
of going in that direction until 10 years
ago. P) Purse seining, as a whole, in the
Gulf has not been successful. They would
be more successful now in the Gulf if
they depended entirely on the hook. In
shore, the nature of the bottom is such

that it tears the seines all to pieces, and most of our seines would be likely to touch bottom where the fish can be readily taken. Around Magdalene it is rather rough bottom for a long distance out.

Mackerel have been found as near shore as they can go. Never heard of mackerel entering brackish waters.

All the different families of sharks are very destructive to mackerel; and whales are also. Blue fish are very

destructive on our coast, but do not go into the Gulf.

④ Considers no harm in fishing with pound nets in Buzzards Bay during part of the year. Has been chairman of

Mass. the House Committee for 2 years, and is now in the State Senate

④ Some schools of mackerel are about all one size, but they are frequently mixed up, all sizes. ④ Find scattering fish all along the shore during the mackerel season. ④ As to the general catch, don

are not as many large mackerel in proportion
as there used to be. The purse seine
takes more of the small fish, otherwise
there might be just as many small
ones as formerly.

9) Mackerel spawn from the latter
part of May until about the 10th of
June on this coast, from Block Isd.
to the Bay of Fundy. Does not think
they spawn south of Block Island
very much. They go into the night

temperature of water to spawn. In the Gulf they spawn from the middle of June until the 1st of July. Thinks they spawn at the bottom. Has seen it along the entire shore when you would not see one solitary mackerel, and when the Bay was full of them - That is when they are down spawning. They will disappear probably for 10 days or so, and would not see any during that time. After spawning, it takes about a month

n 6 weeks for them to get in good condition,
and then they are in good condition until
the end of the year, when they go off the
water. ♀) Never observed any disease par-
ticularly. Sometimes there is a substance
that they feed upon which seems to
injure them. They seem to be poor
and smell bad. Never observed many
large mackerel. Never found discarded
fish among them. Never saw dead
mackerel in any abundance. ♀) The fish

are not so spry along about the spawning time. Seem to be more stupid and dull. Thinks there has been a decrease in the abundance of mackerel of late years.

Inspection Reports as early as 1886 can be obtained at the State House in Boston. Information of the same character also in the reports of the Boston Fish Bureau. Thinks the purse seine has been the cause of the decrease. The purse seines have diminished the quantity of mackerel by catching large quantities

of mackerel at times when they are not fit for food - not large enough - and has destroyed them in that way by not letting them grow to the prop. size. Does not think the purse seine frighten the schools much. They have certain spots where they are bound for when they come on the coast, and if circumstances are not against them, if the bait is there, they will go where it is, and ^{this} will be changed more by circumstances than

by anything else. No mackerel found in
white water — it drives them away.

This white water will run along sometimes
for 50 or 100 miles, and when they
strike that there are no fish.

Think there should be an international
law prohibiting the taking of all
mackerel, in purse seines or otherwise,
before a certain date — say before the
^{1st} of June. Does not believe in pro-
hibiting the purse seines and not

prohibiting nets, powder, etc. The gounds
and gill nets should have the same pro-
hibition as the purse lines. There
has been a great destruction of fish
from human agency. In addition to
the natural destruction of fish, man
comes in with other appliances, and
he comes in before the fish have a
chance to spawn. If a school is
allowed to spawn a new school will
be produced. If they are taken before

they spawn there is no chance for that.

There were so many vessels went south

and they destroyed so many fish, that they

concluded to stop it, and have a close

season for five years. As the fish

came ^{up} down along shore they took them

in traps, nets and other methods; and then

when the fish struck down about Cape

Sable, they had lots of traps, and

caught lots of fish. The ^{purse seines} ~~fishermen~~

would see those fish pass right down

along the shore, and were not allowed to take them. That caused dissatisfaction. Should have a close season to cover the spawning time. A certain class of fishermen would go against this, especially those who make a business of nothing else but mackereling. But thinks the fishery business as a whole would look at it in a fair way, and be willing to adopt that which seems best for the continuance of the business as a whole.

and would benefit the greatest number.
He looks at it in this way. They do not
want to do business for a day, but must
look out for the future. The whole
world is interested in the food supply,
and fish is the chief food of the poor
people. #) Does not see why the fishing
interest should not be willing to co-
operate with the Commission.
There was a much larger number of
men engaged in the mackerel fishing

under the old system before the introduction
of purse seine; engaged in the summer
mackerel fishing; and a large number
of people employed. The average gain
per vessel was better in those days
than it is now. The outfit did not
cost so much. Employed his men at
his expense. Cannot employ boys
now, which they used to be able to do.
The tendency now is to ship able-bodied
men. Under the old system the old

men were almost as useful as the active
men. Boys 12 or 15 years of age would
go and catch a very good share of
mackerel. Men to-day over 40 not
much use in the seine boat. In the
old days used to carry about 4 boys,
perhaps 14 or 15 years old, and when
they got home in the fall, some would
make a very good year's work of it,
and they would be learning the business.
The introduction of the power seine

has been the greater curse to the bay
of anything that has ever occurred.
Fish could be taken with the hook
and line just as they used to be,
but would have to educate the
fishermen to catch them. I had to
go out in May and come back with
200 barrels of ^{menhaden} sardines. Would sell them
for fishing bait, and that made
quite an industry, catching menhaden
for bait. I do not think the

Cts

practice of taking bait fish for
baitfish has been a good one. That
has been destructive to the fishing.

Gloucester, Mass.

Capt. Wm T. Greenleaf.

Survived by William Wakeham, Richard Rathbone & Hugh M.
Nov. 20, 1893.

Z Smith

Aged 45. Commenced in the
mackerel fishing when he was 12
years of age. Was fishing this year.

First out in the Mary A. Clark,
but not as ~~as~~ master, ^{A.}

③ Cannot tell when mackerel spawn.

Has found them with spawn from
the 1st of June to the 20th of July.

Has seen them the 1st of June on this
coast. Would not say they were ready
to spawn, but pretty near to it.

They begin to let their spawn out by
the 10th of June on the Mass. coast.
Has seen them spawn the 20th of July
in the Bay Shallow. They do not
all spawn at the same season of
the year. There is a difference of 6
or 7 weeks. Never fished at Block
Island except some little time when
coming home in the spring. During
spawning time fish are not so apt to
come to the surface, especially in the

Bay Chaleur. More so than anywhere else. ⁹⁾ Before they spawn they are poor. Get fat about 2 weeks after spawning. They fatten up rapidly after spawning. Late in the fall those fish commence to lose flesh again. Mackerel 6 weeks ago were very fat; today (now) are not so fat.

⁹⁾ There has been a decrease in the abundance of mackerel. Do not

find the same ~~kind~~^{quantity} of fish that they
used to. In 1881-2-3 were very heavy
catches. ^AI Had his vessel built in
1882. Entered in the business at that
time and followed it up until 1888.
Since that time there has been a gradual
falling off in mackerel, but whether
there is not as many in the ocean is
not prepared to say. ^AI Should say
there were more large mackerel according
to the quantity caught. Not many

small mackerel on the coast this year.
Did not go south this spring. ^D) Is not
unwarranted to say whether the purse seine
has had any effect on the abundance
of mackerel or not. The seining must
certainly break up the fish and scatter
them. Anything that will annoy
fish and disturb them will certainly
separate them, but in regard to
diminishing the quantity, does not
know that it does. ^D) Does not know

that blue fish ~~destroy~~ mackerel, but
they drive them and scare them. Does
not think whales annoy them much.
The horse mackerel probably would
have them. ^(#) Does not think the
horse seine needs to be regulated in
any way. If that is really the
cause of diminishing the catch, which
he does not think it is, let it go
and see. ^(#) Does not think much of
the close season. Would not sign

The petition for a close season. It is not late enough to protect the fish. Every body should know that the spawn is in them at that time. Would not advocate extending such a season to the 1st of July. Would not regulate the same in any way. [¶]) The south mackerel fishing now is to their advantage. A close season might be a protection to the owners of vessels, but otherwise does not see that it is any benefit.

There is no way in which he would regulate
the mackerel fishing. His idea is:-

"catch them when you can;" ²⁾ Would

not protect them in the Gulf of St.

Lawrence. Has been in the Gulf
and up to 1866-67

before the war; about 1858, and has

seen fish as scarce then as they have

ever been since, when the heaviest trip

that came out, excepting one, was 94

barrels. That is 24 years ago, this summer.

Cannot say positively as to the above dates.

If purse seines were given up, mackerel could be caught with hook and line as they used to be, but thinks it would take time to adapt the fish to the habit of taking bait, but they would learn in time. Does not know whether hook and line fishing would give employment to more men or not, but probably it would increase the fleet about double, and that would tend to give more work to more men, and give the boys a chance.

But it would make the share a great deal
smaller, unless the price on the fish should
double. I have known them to come
home and sell extra large fish
for from \$17. to '19. a barrel. This
year they paid \$20 a barrel for the
extras. Purse seines are a more expensive
way of catching them. Vessels generally
carry 2 seines - a few only have one.
A large purse seine costs about \$840
The last one he had made cost him

1030. #) To fit a vessel out with hook
and line does not cost anything com-
paratively speaking. Perhaps \$15. for
the gear. But they use more bait.

Our vessel went in the 1st of July, and
commenced fishing, and would use from
65 to 80 barrels of pogies and clams
in a season. Used to pay \$5. to \$6.
a barrel for pogies and \$7. to \$9. a
barrel for clams. Would use 30 bbls.
of pogies to 7 or 8 barrels of clams.

In the hook and line fishing days, it began as early as it does now. They used to go as far as Sandy Hook, and from there on north. Would get to Sandy Hook about the 1st to 5th of May. Only about half a dozen sail would go down there. Did not take much account of it. [¶] The 1st of July expected to see them all preparing for the Bay Chaleur. Some would not go until the 10th or 15th of July.

Vessels that took 200 barrels considered it quite a fine catch, in the southern fishery. Does not think they got any fancy price for them. ^D) Did not begin to run fish up into New York until they used the purse seines, although some might have run a few in. ^D) It is within 10 years that vessels have begun to follow fish along the Cape Shore. ^D) Previous to that they used to enter the Gulf of St. L. directly, at the proper season. When

the vessels formerly uttered the Gulf, they did not arrive there until the spawning season was pretty well over. The earliest he has ever been in the Gulf was the 1st of July. After the 20th of June they used to bite quite well until they settled, apparently to spawn. They had then a very small fleet, perhaps a half dozen to a dozen. ^④ I did not use gill nets then. Only knows of 2 vessels that carried gill nets. All the

gill nets he ever saw used there were used
by the Nova Scotia people at the

Magdalens. ⁹⁾ In 1883 some 4 or 5

ships commenced around Locketport,

U.S. ⁹⁾ Has not been in the Bay

whalemen for 5 years. ⁹⁾ Never went

menhaden fishing.

⁹⁾ As a general thing when you find

a school of fish, do not find much

difference in the size. Some schools

that are No. 1st have a few No. 2nd

mixed with them. Some years ago when
tinkers were very plenty they would
haul up considerable quantities of them,
and as they did not want them, would
throw them out. I do not think the
introduction of the purse seine has
been a good thing. If the purse
seine had never been invented, and
the trawls never put in the water,
consider our fishing industry would
be just as well off. The fleet a-

whole has been benefitted by the use
of the purse seines. They are benefitted
every year by the use of them. Think
the trawl has been injurious because
it is apt to clean the fish up
faster than they multiply. The
trawl line and purse seine have
cheapened the price of fish because
it introduces more on the market.
always has been a demand for all
the fish taken. For the last 3 or 4

years a smaller number of vessels engaged
in fishing than there used to be.

In good years a greater number of vessels
purse seining than there ever was with
the hook and line. ¶ The percentage
of large fish is just as great now
proportionately as ever. They have
been larger this year according to the
number taken than for some years
before. ¶ No mackerel lost by the
fuel burning their stomachs; that is

for the last 3 or 4 years, because they
have not caught them in large enough
quantities. Now we ^{bunt} ~~put~~ the sumi
after pursuing and do not kill them.
Probably out of 100 barrels would be
11 or 12 barrels that would get killed.
The loss from this cause was the
greatest in the southern fishery.

Was fishing south in 1884-85-86.
There was a great many fish brought
in during those years, and as people

did not want them, had to leave them
overboard. nothing else to do with them.

I Has known of scattering mackerel
being caught in the winter months down
on Brown's Bank. They were small fish.
Would be taken from the stomachs of cod
fish. Could not say what caused them
to be there, but probably were spawned
in the Bay Chaleur and came ^{out} late.
Has known them to be caught there in
January. Has heard of mackerel

being taken with the herring at Newfoundland
in the winter, in Fortune Bay. Has
seen them in January and also in February.
They would be medium size fish. Good
No. 2 fish. Never saw large ones.

9) Mackrel stop in the Bay of Fundy
as long as anywhere. After they once
get there in the middle of July will
find them all the rest of the summer.

9) They catch them later, however, around
Block Island than anywhere else.

Has seen fish around the Sable Islands in August. Does not know which way they were going. About the 15th of August every year they see fish schooling around the Sable Islands; that is, people living around there.

Mackerel generally strike Cape Sable in the spring about the 12th of May, and sometimes as early as the 9th ^{of} Cape. Adams thinks it is a little later, about the 18th when they are taken in the

traps at Yarmouth). They enter the
Gulf of St Lawrence before that time.
They are seen after the first spring
tides in May. Those early mackerel
go in around Cape Breton. The secnd
run begins about June 20. They
come around Cape Breton also. Very
few go through the Straits. A few
go through the Gut of Canso. I do
not think large schools go through
the Gut of Canso. Remmels are

year, - thinks it was 1885, - a large school went in through the Straits of

Canso, but they were small fish.

That year (1885) he went through the

Straits of Canso about July 5, and

from the time he went in to Chedabucto

Bay they never were out of sight of fish.

They were tinker mackerel, and were in

abundance, but those small fish do

not remain long in the Gulf of St

Lawrence, and do not go far north. Probably
not as far as North Cape.

Gloucester, Mass.

Capt. Nelson E. Cantillo
Interviewed by William Watkum, Richard Rathbun and Hugh M. Smith,
Nov. 21, 1893

Aged 33. Captain Schooner Name of vessel Herbert

Mr. Rogers. Has had 11 years'

experience mackerel fishing.

Does not think mackerel have decreased for the last 8 years. For

the last 2 years more abundant

than the previous 5 years. The

first three years of his experience they

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most abundant of any time, except one

Gloucester, Mass.

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9) Does not think mackerel have decreased for the last 8 years. For the last 2 years more abundant than the previous 5 years. The first three years of his experience they were plenty. In 1884-5-6 were the most abundant of any time, except one

year before his time. ⁹⁾ Does not think the
pure sun is doing any harm. Does not
think it is causing any decrease in the
fish. It may make the schools wilder.
This year at the south the fish were
just as wild before we set for them as
afterwards. Could not catch them at
all when we first saw them. ⁹⁾ They were
after salt mackerel. Did not attempt to
run up fresh ones. Got about 20 bbls.
& salt mackerel. ⁹⁾ If they stopped

catching mackerel with the seine would
have to stop catching them altogether.

cannot catch them with the hook and

line now to amount to anything. I do

not think the close season was any

wrong at all. The fishermen thought

it was going to help them. They

thought the early fishing drove them

off the shore up here. I wanted not

regulate the fishing in any way. Wanted

let it go on just as it is. I Nowadays

There is no one to catch fish with the
hook. One man might catch 2 or 3
barrels and another man not familiar
with it would not get so mackerel.
Does not think, even though ~~the~~ told
bait was thrown to some extent around
here it would be any good. Does not
think there is any use having a close
season on the fence seine at any time.
Supposes mackerel should have protection
before they spawn, but the only trip they

can depend upon now is the Cape Shore

tuna. 9) Mackerel spawn all through
June and into July; to the 10th of July.

Never caught any fish around Block Id,
with spawn in, but never used to fish
there much. Go there in the summer
mostly after the spawning season is over.

The ones we catch after the 20th of July
are all fish that have spawned.

Catching so many fish full of spawn
will certainly tell on the fishery.

This fall down in the Bay, as far as we could see were these small mackerel, and the question is where do they go to.

Dog fish and blue fish are about the only ones that harm mackerel.

Blue fish drive them, but does not think they destroy them. He is from the Cape Shore now, got 180 barrels.

Supposes they ~~got~~ ^{caught} altogether, 500 barrels and lost them by the seines bursting.

Started on this falls trip the 1st of

August. Got wrecked down at Magdalen
the 24th of August; blowing a gale. There
were mackarel all around them then. Lost
one boat in that gale and lost their
sails and anchors.

8) Mackarel just ready to spawn will
not take the hook. Will not take it
until after they are done spawning. Do
not seem to have any appetite. They
go to the bottom when they are spawning,
so that we cannot see them then.

They stay down perhaps 2 or 3 weeks.

Has been fishing in the fall on the
Cape Shore for 7 or 8 years. About
the same number of vessels go there
every year. Mackerel came around
Sidney and around Cape North this year
and came in close. There are mostly
two schools come into the Bay. The
first school comes out last. It goes
about the last of May and stays in
until November. They go around Cape

North. Come right back the same
way they go. The second school goes
down about the 1st or middle of June,
usually the middle of June. Those
are smaller fish. They go around
since Edwards Island. Does not
think they go any further than that.
They go in both ways - down and
around Cape North. Some of those
will go out as early as August. They
come out both ways too. Those small

fish would be all out of the Bay about
the 1st of October. 9) Mackrel run just
as large now on an average as ever since
he began fishing.

9) Has heard of mackrel being
caught in the winter, on the bottom
~~in~~ trawls, around Georges. Has
heard of their being caught off Cape
Cod once or twice. Never heard of
these being taken late with the herring.

9) Mackrel are found in the greatest

numbers around the Cape Shore in the spring. Last year they collected in large numbers in the Bay of Fundy, and also the year before. The mouth of the Bay of Fundy is around Seal Islands; about 25 miles west of Seal Is. Has seen mackerel off shore on Georges. Has seen them 90 miles off New Jersey. Very often go over Georges, and between Georges and Brown's Bank. They go even the outside of Georges. The fish that

numbers around the Cape Shore in the spring. Last year they collected in large numbers in the Bay of Fundy, and also the year before. The mouth of the Bay of Fundy is around Seal Islands; about 25 miles west of Seal Is. has seen mackerel off shore on Georges. Has seen them 90 miles off New Jersey. Very often go over Georges, and between Georges and Brown's Bank. They go even to the outside of Georges. The fish that

go across Georges all go to the Cape Shore.

The fish that come on this shore, come up

along by Cape Cod, between Nantucket

Shoals and Nantucket. Come through

the South Channel and keep right

along the coast. Strike in at Bourne's
Bay and follow the shore right down.

All the fish that go into the North

Bay first strike the Nova Scotia shore.

Very often they strike Cape Sable.

But of late years they go way down to

the eastward of Halifax. Generally expect to strike them between Halifax and Canso. Has known them to strike at Halifax and Canso before Cape Sable. ⁹⁾ Has followed a single school for 5 or 6 miles. That is one school, but has followed a body of fish for hundreds of miles. ⁹⁾ Very often get scattering mackerel in the Gulf as late as Christmas, but the most of them are out of the Gulf by

the middle of November. At the Cape
Shore they disappear about the same
time. See fish the 10th of November
off Canso. Late in the fall fish
get poor. There late schools along
the Cape Shore are going along the
shore in a W. S. W. direction. The body
of the mackerel leave the coast of
Maine the last of September and go
down into Barnstable Bay. Probably
stay there 3 weeks, and then work out

around Cape Cod. That is the last we
see of them. Those at Block Island
are the native ones that come there to
spawn. Fish around Block Island
remain there. Have been much fish
during the last 4 or 5 years, but before
that used to get more large fish.

There is a body of fish around Block
Island all through the summer. There
is a lot of boats fishing there now, and
he thinks they find them so they stay.

Get all signs there at the same time.

Get them there about the middle of May.

Get them there this spring the 10^a of

May. They stay there at Block Island

until in November. When the fish

leave the coast they leave in larger

schools than when they approach the

coast. They follow the same course on

leaving the coast as they do when they

come. It is always the outside schools

that go over or around Georges to the

eastward. ⁹⁾ The winter schools in the spring are generally a smaller fish than the autumn schools. ⁹⁾ I saw a great many small mackerel coming out of the Bay this year. More than he ever saw before about 7 or 8 inches long. They were hatched this year. He measured some of them and they were 7 inches. A year from now they will be about 10 inches. Does not believe mackerel grow much in the winter. The next year they would be

about 12 inch fish. It takes 2 years to make No. 2^o. The smallest length for No. 1 fish is 13 inches. Would require 4 years to make a no. 1 fish.

The quality of the fish does not depend upon the length, but upon the condition. The first fish that enter the Gulf of St. Lawrence and the last to come out are a coarser and darker bellied fish than those which we find along our own shore, and, practically, than all the others.

Gloucester, Mass.

Capt. Thomas C. Parzis

joined by William Wakeham, Richard Rathbone and Hugh M. Smith,
Nov. 21, 1893

Has been mackerel fishing 25

years. Seining for 17 years.

Captain Home

Schooner
of vessel Lottie Gardner.

Does not think the mackerel have
decreased as a whole. Thinks they have
increased for the last 4 or 5 years.

Had a spell of bad fishing. Those good
years preceding bad ones were 1882-3-4.

The best year, he thinks, was 1883.

Beginning with 1886, it was bad up to

3 years ago. Does not think the purse
seine hurts the fish any. Fish this
summer down the Bay were wilder than
he ever saw them before. Thinks it
was caused by the feed. They were
chasing a little shrimp. This fall
after the feed had left they seemed to
be quite easy to catch. The purse
seine should be allowed all the time.
Would not have a close season. Does
not think the close season that was

in force helped the fish any. The close season would not protect the fish during the spawning season, because whenever you catch fish in June they are all full of spawn. The fish sink to spawn and it is difficult to find them then. Would not advocate a renewal of that close season, or of any other close season to cover the spawning season. When he was a small boy he engaged in the

hook and line fishing. thinks perhaps they might do better hook and line fishing than with seines, but it would take some time. When they go hook and line fishing now they use the same methods that they used to, as near as he knows.

No particular region where the seine should not be used. I get a poor class of fish from the south. Has never been a profitable fishing taken as a whole. A few years ago

There were some pretty good springs work.

Was with Sol. Jacobs in 1883-84, and
that was the best he ever did.

Would not have any regulations with regard
to mackerel fishing. All fish taken
before the middle of June, or perhaps
the 20th of June have spawn in them.

Thinks June is the spawning month.

They spawn in the Gulf of St. Lawrence,
he thinks, in June. That is the
month they spawn the most anywhere,

at least wherever he has been. They spawn perhaps a week earlier on this shore than they do in the Gulf. The fish are more easy to catch just before they spawn than at other times. More easy to catch along the Cape shore than down south. I never went fishing south with hook and line. The furthest south he has taken fish was 7 years ago, about 40 or 50 miles this side of Nettaras, as near as he can

remember. Was in the Ellen M. Adams at that time. Those fish at the south are heading north. Some years they go more in shore than others. Fish are both schooling and scattered at that time. Some years they see them way to the south of Georges, and they go down off Noman's Land. (?) thinks that part of the fish from the southern school come in at Block Island. Others strike off

around and over the southern part of Georges Bank, and those are the fish which go into the Cape Shore; that is, most of them. Some strike into the Bay of Fundy. ¶ The fish that come on this part of the coast, some of them come through the south channel, and those go close in shore; and some which go over Georges come on this shore. ¶ The fish reach Block Island region about the 10th to the 20th of May. ¶ They strike

the Cape Shore about the last of May;
from the 25th of May to the 1st of June.

A few years ago they used to catch them
off to the westward of ~~St~~^L Hanc, but
of late years they seem to strike in
further east of Halifax. In the first
year he went down there was 7 years ago.

Thinks that the Cape Shore fishing
has been resorted to for at least 10
or 12 years, and perhaps longer.

The fish enter the Gulf of St Lawrence

about the 2nd or 3rd of June. These
fish are large. They go around Cape
Breton Island. There seems to be a
big body that strikes nearly to the north
from the Cape Shore; the second school,
and they go along for a week and then
go into the Gulf. Some years this
second school remains on the Cape
Shore for the biggest part of the
time, and other years they may go in as
early as a week after the first school.

The half of the fish of the second school
go around Cape North. Some go
through the Gulf of Baffin. Those small
fish in the Gulf go up as far as West
Cape; as far as Miscon. They go out
earlier than the other schools. Does
not know just when they leave. This
year somewhere about the 1st of November
they commenced to go up the Cape Shore;
that is the small fish go out about the
1st of November. The large fish

remain there sometimes as late as the 25th
of November. Have been caught as
late as that. The fish they have
been catching lately are the large fish
that are coming out. This fall they
were very nice fish; mostly 1ⁿ and 2ⁿ.
The fish are in the best condition in
September and October, and about the
same in November. The fish strike
Portland, Maine, some years in August
and September. That is called the

best month on this shore. Sometimes they go there earlier. Sometimes very small schools caught there in June and July. They get into the Bay of Fundy in July. Some years they do not go to the Bay of Fundy. Fish used to be much more abundant in the Bay of Fundy than they are now. Thinks most of the fish that come on our shores come from the south. Never saw fish when they could not see. Might be a scale over

their eyes, but they could see.

9) The left of the fish probably leave the Gulf about the 10th or 15th of November. There are about 3 schools that come out in the fall - one in the last of October and from the 1st to the 25th of November. Would be found on the Cape Shore about a week after they leave the Gulf. On the coast of Maine they seem to ^{leave} pretty early. Last year they left in October; about the 1st to the 10th. This

year they hung on a little later. I would
not attempt to follow the fish much in
the fall. When the schools are leaving
they are about the same size as those
coming on the coast. I never caught
any mackerel in the winter. Has heard
of them being caught. A few scattering
ones caught in other fish on Georges
Bank.