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Gloucester, Mass.

Capt. John E. Gorman

Interviewed by William Wakeham, Richard Rathbun and Hugh M. Smith

Nov. 20, 1893

Has had 34 years experience in the mackerel fishery. Captain of Schooner Ambrose H. Knight of Gloucester.

Engages in the southern mackerel fishery. This year did not go further south than the Delaware Breakwater. Has been down off Cape Henry years ago. Has taken fish down abreast of Cape Henry in 25 to 35 fathom of water.

Thinks they began that

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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 times gone as far as New York.

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

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scattering fish except at night.

The course of the fish is N.E. to N.N.E. as they work up from the southern grounds. 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 seen schools down there years ago that

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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 Fenwicks Island.

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

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not think it was mackerel; but when I came up it was lighter, and I saw this white foam all over the water just 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.”

The first schools of mackerel are large fish about 14 to 16 inch fish. The second schools run about 11 to 13 inches.

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See the second school within a week after the first school. This year they got the smallest one first, so small that they mashed in the seines.

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.

There

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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 night on the southern edge of Georges, but they are very wild. They have tried to catch them, but have never caught

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any to his knowledge, except one trip, at South Shoal Light Ship.

Has gone as far north for mackerel as Fox River near Gaspe, that is 34 years ago, the first time he went.

Mackerel run more different sizes in the same school now than they did in old times. Fish those times would run about one size. Now get more sizes to a school. Average smaller now.

They apparently do not

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come on our shore as they used to years ago; that is on the Maine coast. They seem to take more to the Nova Scotia coast and the Bay Chaleur.

The fish that go into the Gulf of St. L. go in two schools. The first school goes in around Cape Breton, and the next school, some claim that a part of it goes through Canso, but he does not think that more than a scattering school goes that way.

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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 stop 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

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school from the 10<sup>th</sup> to the 15<sup>th</sup> of June. Supposes that second school is coming out from the 1<sup>st</sup> of August up till fall. They must be on account of their catching them all through the summer, and they must come from that way. The larger fish come out last – very late. Has never noticed these fish going through the Gut of Canso in the fall.

Fish leave the coast of Maine as late as

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the 1<sup>st</sup> of October, and perhaps the middle October. The fish they are getting now at Barnstable Bay, there is a questions about whether they are fish from the Maine coast or fish that come up the Cape Shore, think they come from the Cape Shore.

These are fish that strike in and go into the Bay Chaleur that never strike south at all. Some think they come in from sea. But he thinks

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that they strike to the southward 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 inside

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fish strike 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.

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.

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Never knew of any mackerel being caught during the winter, except a few caught in the cod fishes on Georges. Those are small mackerel. Caught 2 once with haddock on Jeffries, on trawls. 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 where they were bound.

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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

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were stragglers and got in with the herring.

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. Are apt to find the herring and mackerel mixed in the latter part of June, July and August. Has taken herring with the mackerel as

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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, Matinicus, Mt. Desert Rock and Bay of Fundy. Those 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, Bradley, Bay Chaleur,

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Magdalens, and in the spring on the Cape Shore.

The furthest offshore he has ever seen mackerel was this spring, about 75 miles offshore.

Large predacious 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

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driven off by blue fish and other fish, so as to destroy the fishing for a while. For instance, at Block Island, blue fish come 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.

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

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first school, two-third 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

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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

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

Mackerel feed upon lant and red seed. That is about all we see them feed upon. When sailing along and 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.

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It stayed there all summer, and the fish stayed there all summer too. When they see 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

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by this feed burning their stomachs, but if he took a heavy deck load of fish the feed would naturally burn their stomachs 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

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just as thick apparently as the red seed 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 8<sup>th</sup> of June. Think they spawn at Block Island about the 1<sup>st</sup> of June. Those other fish that strike in, strike about the 1<sup>st</sup> of June and then work down back of Nantucket, and spawn on that shore. Inside of the Gulf

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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 toll them up with bait sometimes. Can sometimes catch them with hook and line.

Has caught the early mackerel with hook and line

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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 these, 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

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journeys end.

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 4<sup>th</sup> 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

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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.

Thinks mackerel have decreased. Of course they vary from time to time.

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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 1882 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.

Does not think we will ever get any good fishing like we have

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had as long as they are so many seines. There was an increase year before last, and we looked for a better fishing season this year. But there were only 2,000 more barrels caught this year than last year, and had more vessels employed.

Thinks the purse seine has had an injurious effect both as to the abundance of fish and the breaking up the schools.

Would not regulate the purse seine fishing unless it was stopped altogether.

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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.

Think 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 heave the bait

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

Does not suppose  $\frac{1}{4}$  of the fishermen would be willing to have the purse seines done away with. Would suggest trying to experiment for 3 years. Thinks it takes 3 years for mackerel to grow to be No. 1 fish.

Thinks pound fishing is an injury too.

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Would suggest that it be abolished for the same length of time that the purse seine is abolished.

Would not say anything against gill nets. Total amount of mackerel caught in weirs 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.

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Of course they have not made any big catches, but those in shore 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.

From years ago 16,000 barrels of mackerel were caught, and they have increased every year, and he thinks if they had let the south fishing go until the 1<sup>st</sup> of June for 5 years more it would be still better. Even

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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 would have a 5 year close time, and have it up to the 1<sup>st</sup> of July before vessels were allowed to leave port, he thinks in the next 5 years we would

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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

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Scotia 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 good deal to do with

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seining. 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 Shore 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 off Cape Henry as early as the 17<sup>th</sup>

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of March, and as late as the middle of April. Then they arrive at Block Island about the 1<sup>st</sup> of June, and at the Cape Shore about the same time. Some strike Block Island as early as the 20<sup>th</sup> of May. They first strike the Cape Shore about the 1<sup>st</sup> of June.

Has known them to get mackerel at Scatteri when ice has been drifting around.

Mackerel swim on the Cape Shore in the spring, about 30 or

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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.

Spawn is riper on the Cape Shore than it is at the south when we first see them.

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 so as to

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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.

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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

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fish at Block Island that he has ever known of.

Has been to the Magdalens for bait in the spring. Generally try to get there about the first of May. Has heard them say they got mackerel at Magdalens about the 10<sup>th</sup> of May. It is known that herring have been taken at the Magdalens before they appeared on the Cape Shore – Dr. Wakeham.

In years past we used to find mackerel in the Bay of

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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 in the eastern part of Cashe's, and those mackerel follow into the Bay of Fundy.

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

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caught and brought into New York that they could not sell. Those fish had spawn in them and were destroyed. That fishery as a whole was not a profitable business.

This year he only caught 2 mackerel in the purse seine in the southern fishery. The fish were there, but do not know why we could not catch them.

The average catch in seining will not be as large as the average catch of the hook

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and liners. If you were hooking mackerel you would have a fairer 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.

The cost of the hook and line outfit is small; nothing compared with the cost of a seining outfit. For a good sized mackerel vessel for hook and lining, 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 good hooking.

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### Herring

Capt John E. Gorman

Sch. Ambrose N. Knight, Gloucester.

Interviewed by William Wakeham, Richard Rathbun and Hugh M. Smith

Nov. 20, 1893

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 1/3 of the vessels brought home cargoes of large herring.

The spring herring fishery was very poor this year at Eastport. As long as 24 years ago, very few vessels would go elsewhere for their herring. Some would go to Newfoundland

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but the majority of the herring came from Eastport.

Newfoundland fish are larger and bring a high price than any others, 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 then the Newfoundland fish. Take fish on the muddy bottoms and they are darker grained than others.

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Gloucester, Mass.

Capt. Sylvanus Smith

Interviewed by William Wakeham, Richard Rathbun and Hugh M. Smith

Nov. 20, 1893

Born in 1829 in Rockport, Mass. Rockport used to be a part of Gloucester. Was set off in 1840.

Began mackerel fishing about 1840. Gave it up in 1864. Since then has been interested in the fishing business in Gloucester. Runs from 15 to 18 vessels, all engaged in the various kinds of fishing. Sometimes 8 or 10 engaged, and some seasons not

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more than 2 or 3, just as the prospects appear.

Never pursued the southern mackerel fishery to any great extent. Was down there one or two springs. Went perhaps half way from Cape Henlopen 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. Pattangall of Newburyport went out 22 years

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running to the southern fishery.

Used to start about the 1<sup>st</sup> of May then. About the 1<sup>st</sup> of June used to go to the Gulf of St. Lawrence.

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.

His experience was entirely hook and line fishing.

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Never fished any other way.

This school of fish that struck along our shore and around by Cape Cod, come in on the Mass coast, and sometimes they stay there. The school that went in the Gulf was another school that came across Georges. The first they struck would be about Cape Sable. The southern fish would stop/go sometimes as far east as St. John. Some schools would

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not go further east than Cape Elizabeth. Governed a great deal by the season and the feed in the water.

The condition of those early fish was not good. What 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 1<sup>st</sup> of July.

Has followed bodies of mackerel along for 100 or 200 miles, as they would move east or west. Never

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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 Demond(?), but never caught many fish up there.

There has been on 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.

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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 twine, otherwise the seines would be too heavy. The size of the mesh used to be about 2 inches, and now it is

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down to about 1½ inch. The records of sizes 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-

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eyes this year. When mackerel are scarce; no great difference in piece between common and chub mackerel. The bullseyes were 10 or 11 inches in length. Were mostly No. 3s. Caught some less size than that.

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

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coast in August, and they struck along between here and the Isles of Shoals, an 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 1<sup>st</sup> of November.

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They followed them down Cape Cod as far as Chatham. Do not know that they were ever seen afterwards."

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 1<sup>st</sup> of October. Some of the summer

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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 go into the Bay, are caught from the 10<sup>th</sup> 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 Scatteri. They strike the Nova Scotia shore and follow it right

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

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gets in by the 1<sup>st</sup> of June, and goes well up on the ground.

The smaller mackerel are apt to leave earlier.

Does 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 in through the Gut of Canso, and come back the same way. Fished in these waters (Gulf) 18 years. Any man could not catch fish on the

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hook, but would catch them in gill nets. The early fishing would be with gill nets. Would not bite the hook. Has seen 200 sails there. They were fishing at Magdalens 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

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to some extent, but seem to run deeper in the water, and could not see them so readily. Could take the first schools later with the hook, and also the summer schools. Schools that are not ready to spawn will bite any time. 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

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spawn. You might try over 100 miles of 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 begun to catch them, would catch them everywhere; showing they were on the bottom spawning.

Has caught

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Mackerel in the Gulf of St. Lawrence about the 15<sup>th</sup> 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 28<sup>th</sup> of Nov. at Cape George.

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 somewhere from the edge of the gulf stream, and the fish

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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 causes, as for example, cold weather and ice late in the season 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

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

They started away from here about the 1<sup>st</sup> of May, and by the time they got there 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

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much.

The fleet used to leave for the Gulf of St. Lawrence about the 1<sup>st</sup> of June or 1<sup>st</sup> of July. The early fleet about the 1<sup>st</sup> of June, but the most of them about the 1<sup>st</sup> 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

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there was quite a large fleet that went there from Newburyport, and more or less from Gloucester. That was about the height of the hook and 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 into the Bank fishing. Would fish out for mackerel about the 1<sup>st</sup> of July, after they

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got through their banking voyage.

Fish leave the coast of Maine and Mass. now about the 1<sup>st</sup> of October, and by the 1<sup>st</sup> 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

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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 La Have, but as a general think mackerel that go up and down the coast, go along

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perhaps 8 or 10 miles off, and from that close along the shore. In moving upward along the coast of Nova Scotia they get from 10 to 15 miles off.

Fish taken on the bottom in the winter are just stray ones.

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

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right 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

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

Mackerel are likely to 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

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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.

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 Marguerie.

The last few years there have been schools of fish all the time around Block Island.

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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.

Bullseyes are not caught to any extent north of Block Island.

Never catch mackerel over 60 or 70 miles off our shore. They catch them in the middle of the Gulf of St. Lawrence.

Did not do much fishing on the Cape Shore in his time. Never much done there previous

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to 10 years ago. They would not take the hook then 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.

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. Inshore, the nature of the bottom is such

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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 the Magdalens 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 kinds of sharks are very destructive to mackerel; and whales are also. Blue fish are very

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

Considers no harm in fishing with pound nets in Buzzards Bay during part of the year. Has been chairman of the Mass. House Committee for 2 years, and is now in the State Senate.

Some schools of mackerel are about all one size, but they are frequently mixed up, all sizes.

Find scattering of fish all along the shore during the mackerel season. As to the general catch, there

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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.

Mackerel spawn from the latter part of May until about the 10<sup>th</sup> of June on this coast, from Block Island to the Bay of Fundy. Does not think they spawn south of Block Island very much. They go into the right

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temperature of water to spawn. In the Gulf they spawn from the middle of June until the 1<sup>st</sup> 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

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or 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 coast.

Never observed any disease particularly. 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 logy mackerel. Never found diseased fish among them. Never saw dead mackerel in any abundance.

The fish

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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 1836 can be obtained at the State House in Boston. Also information of the same character 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

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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 proper size.

Does not think the purse seines 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

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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.

Thinks there should be an international law prohibiting the taking of all mackerel in purse seines or otherwise before a certain day – say before the 1<sup>st</sup> of June. Does not believe in prohibiting the purse seines and not

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prohibiting nets, pounds, etc. The pounds and gill nets should have the same prohibition as the purse seines.

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

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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 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 seiners would see those fish pass right down

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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,

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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 cooperate with the Commission.

There was a much larger number of vessels engaged in the mackerel fishery

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under the old system before the introduction of purse seines; engaged in the summer mackerel fishery; and a larger 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 less men at less 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

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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 today 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 years work of it, and they would be learning the business. The introduction of the purse seine

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has been the greatest curse to the boys 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.

Used to go out in May and come back with 200 barrels of Menhaden slivers. Would sell them for fishing bait, and that made quite an industry, catching menhaden for bait.

Does not think the

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Practice of taking bait fish for fertilizer has been a good one. Thinks it has been destructive to the fishing.