50 Years is a Long Time

BY J. C. LEWIS

(Guardian Staff Writer)

If all the lobsters that Austin Murphy has pulled from the wreck-strewn waters off North Cape Reef were placed end to end, they would reach from his fishing grounds to a point about twenty miles east of East Point or midway between Prince Edward Island and Cape Breton. If it had been possible last summer for you to buy at some City retail fish or meat market an amount of lobsters, freshly boiled, equalling in weight his total catch you would need three-quarters of a million dollars.

For "Aust" Murphy has by back-breaking toil—never lightened by any labour-saving device except a large wooden roller—pulled out of the rough, tide-swirling waters more than 800,000 pounds of the world's choicest shell-fish. Many a man has been decorated for a much lesser achievement.

Of course, anyone with even an elementary knowledge of lobster fishing knows that such an enormous quantity was never caught by one man in one season. Nor by one man in a dozen seasons. As a matter of fact, few of the many thousands of men in the Maritimes who have devoted all their adult years to lobster fishing can claim to have equalled such a total catch.

Half A Century

When "Aust" Murphy (weather permitting) drops his first line of traps in the water today, he may be excused if he takes time out for a moment to straighten up and allow his memory and imagination to recall that other May day, 50 years ago, when he, a lad of 14 pulled his first lobster trap.

Fifty years is a long time in the life of a fisherman. It is a long time, even, in the life of a country, especially if that country's birth be, like Canada's, of comparatively recent origin. On that May day in 1897, when young Murphy and his boss, Frank Basil Arsenault, sailed their little fishing boat over the North Cape Reef to the lobster grounds beyond, Canada had not yet reached her thirtieth birthday and a man named Wilfrid Laurier had only been Premier for a few months. The Spanish-American War was just one year away; the Boer War was still in the future; and more than seventeen years were to elapse before Germany was to make her first world-shaking effort for "a place in the sun." Motor cars, marine gas engines, radios, and thousands of other mechanical inventions were not even in the blue-print stage.

Rich In Legend

The reef off North Cape over which "Aust" has sailed almost daily during the months of May and June — the lobster season opens on May 1st and closes July 1st— since 1897 is rich in legend. Beginning at the shore, it runs out to sea for five or six miles in a northeasterly direction, then bends and runs north for a mile and a half or more. At low tide one can walk upon it for more than a mile. At high tide it is covered by from two to six feet of water.

Large boulders and strange, unrecognizable objects, rusted and twisted by the passing of time and the fury of the sea, are strewn upon it. Here, several years ago Mr. W. E. Agnew, provincial trade agent to Newfoundland and son of the late Hon. John Agnew, who established the first lobster factory at North Cape, found English shillings embedded in the fine silt which is continuously swept over the reef from the sea. As a boy at his father's factory, Mr. Agnew used to earn his pocket money by searching the reef at low tide and gathering up large copper bolts which at one time had been part of some great square-rigged ship.

For many years a large rudder, made of oak and some 25 or 30 feet long, stuck upward on the reef several feet above high water mute evidence of the tragic fate, a century or more ago, of some great sailing ship which, moving majestically along in deep water, suddenly found her bowels being ripped open upon the murderous, jagged rocks.

Mr. and Mrs. Austen Murphy of Alberton, photographed at Jersey City, N.J., last winter with one of their grandchildren.

Sinister Reef

Strange, sinister stories — perhaps a blending of fact with fiction—are told concerning the Reef. It is said there are houses in the vicinity of North Cape whose huge, oaken timbers and framework were salvaged from the wrecks of giant square-rigged ships which smashed themselves upon the Reef before the erection of the first lighthouse at the Cape in 1866. Tales there are, too, of persons in those early, pre-lighthouse days luring hapless vessels upon the Reef by means of lights from the shore in order to rob the stricken ships of their valuables. Two generations of fishermen have come and gone, however, since the building of the lighthouse and no one living today can vouch for those tales still told wherever fishermen gather at night in their sacks along that dreary shore.

Only one ship, a huge Norwegian square-rigger, has struck the Reef since the North Cape Light, 80 years ago, began casting its piercing beams half-way to Miscou across the mighty Gulf. She went aground during fine weather and, with the help of scores of willing fishermen, got back into deep water without suffering serious damage.

This is the background of the place where, in 50 years today, Austin Murphy has written an epic of the sea. Written it in toil and sweat; written it when the muscles of his back and legs and arms continuously cried out for relief; written it when the sea was calm and the sun was shining; written it when there was no sun and the skies were ominous with inky clouds and the seas in tumultous confusion were smashing over the gunwales of his little boat and salting his face with their spray; written it in his dogged, prosaic fashion in order that his wife and children might live in that comfort which they have always known.

In Sailboats

For 20 years "Aust" fished out of sailboats. Many a time when the day's work was done and the last trap had been pulled and baited, he and his boss, or he and his man, would have to pick up their heavy, spruce oars and wearily pull their lobster-laden boat some six or seven miles to the shore. For sailboats do not take you any particular place when there is no wind and the tide is against you.

Then came the motor-boat. "Aust" cannot recall who had the first engine-driven lobster boat at North Cape. For a time the old-fashioned fisherman disdained them. Would have nothing to do with them. The world, he said, was coming to a pretty pass when people began turning their backs on the sails of their fathers and went chug-chugging across the water in calm or storm, with or against the tide. It was not natural. Besides, the roar of the exhaust, heard for miles, and the scum of the oil upon the water could not be good for the fish. Moreover, the damn engines were always breaking down and leaving the boats helpless upon the sea.

But the seasons passed. Those with engines were often out upon their gear on calm days and had their lines fished and back to shore before the sailboat fisherman had sighted his first buoy. The additional time saved meant bigger gears could be fished with resultant bigger profits.

"Aust" bought his first engine-powered boat in 1913. For the first time he was "his own man" owning his own gear. He was doing well. Year after year he was "high-line" at the Cape. He knew the waters off the Reef as a woman knows her child and thus his traps rested always on the choicest feeding grounds of the lobster. Fifteen thousand pounds of the world's tastiest shell-fish was but a fair season for him.

Bountiful Catch

There were years when his landings amounted to over 20,000 pounds. On one day in 1915, he emptied 3,500 pounds of lobsters into his boat. Imagine a small boat, perhaps 26 or 26 feet long with a seven-foot beam —a boat whose carrying capacity was never intended by the builder to provide for more than a ton of fish —with nearly two tons of live, crawling lobsters aboard and you in that boat whose gunwales were but two or three inches above the water, some six or seven miles from land. "Aust" did the only thing he could do. He laid the oars along the washboards to prevent the lobsters from crawling over the sides; started his engine; and prayed for smooth water. He landed the catch safely.

Lest anyone may think, after reading of such catches as this, that there must be a fortune in the lobster-fishing business, it may be well to mention that a fisherman's expenses often amount to more than half the price he receives for his lobsters. It requires literally miles of 15-thread rope to put out 300 traps. The traps demand large expenditures for laths, sills, hoops, and lobster twine. And a lobster gear without herring nets is like a watch without a mainspring. They and the corks to float them, the rope and the anchors to hold them, and the tanning material to preserve them, all cost money. Then there is the paint for the boat, the gas and the oil for the engine, the rubber boots and the oilclothes, and the hundreds of wooden buoys and countless other things necessary before the fisherman is ready to drop his first trap overboard.

Costly Equipment

In the olden days, the fisherman paid dearly for his equipment. Most of it was supplied by the packer to whom he sold his fish. The packer bought the fisherman's supplies in wholesale lots and retailed them to the fisherman at a handsome profit. It is no wonder, then, that at the close of the season, the fisherman often found that all he had coming to him for months of gruelling, slavish work was a few dollars. Sometimes, he found himself owing the packer.

It is true "Aust" never found himself in such a position. He was too good a fisherman and landed too many fish not to make a profit each season. But he has sold lobsters as low as $4 per hundred pounds. And it takes a lot of lobsters for a man to make any money at that price, even when, as in years past, the cost of living was much cheaper than now.

Thirteen years ago, he took one of the great, forward steps in his fishing career: he joined the Tignish Fisheries Union. The Union was the first of its kind in the Maritimes. Before its founding, some 25 years ago, there was no such thing as independence for the lobster fisherman. He had no control over the prices he paid for his equipment nor for the price he received for his fish. He lived at the shore under conditions which no city dweller would tolerate for a day. His food was of the plainest and the most unpalatable. Very often it was "dished up" to him by a cook, generally a female who knew nothing of domestic science, in enamel plates chipped and scarred through many years of use. Very often the bread was sour and the molasses cake soggy and heavy as lead.

Founded Union

Chester P. McCarthy, a lawyer and former lobster fisherman of Tignish, founded the Union, pledging his own property along with that of a few fishermen as security. A dining-hall with clean, spotless tables and culinary equipment was established. Cooks, the best that could be obtained, were employed. Three times a day food was served the fishermen that could not be surpassed at any hotel in the Province and at a cost which the fisherman soon realized was lower than that required to feed himself at home. But that was only part of the overall picture. The Union fisherman now got his equipment at wholesale prices and, through his Union, obtained, in many cases, a higher price for his lobsters than even his former packer-employer received.

This spring "Aust" is making a concession to advancing age. He is 64 now and the physical toil upon back and arm muscles is beginning to tell. And so today, when his boat comes to a stop over his fishing grounds off the Reef, there will be a "hauler" aboard.

A "hauler" is a mechanical contrivance consisting of a small engine connected to a large wooden roller located in the bow of the boat. When the first buoy of the lobster line or "bunch" is picked up, a couple of loops is thrown round the roller, the switch of the little engine is turned on, and round goes the roller and the rope with it at an appalling rate. As soon as the first trap breaks the surface, the switch is turned off, the trap is lifted to the washboard, emptied, rebaited, and shoved back along the washboard toward the stern of the boat. On goes the switch again and up comes the second trap. It is as easy as that. "Aust" is going to enjoy the novelty of watching those traps come up without that muscle straining which has become, in 50 years, something more than tiresome.

He was married in 1905. Sixteen children—two died in infancy—were born of the union.

His wife, the former Jane Skerry of Alberton South, comes from a line of sea-farers so that, when she married "Aust", Mrs. Murphy was not going into a new environment.

Often when women gather nowadays, the conversation centres about the seriousness of the domestic help problem, but Mrs. Murphy never asked for nor had a maid. Yet her home could well be photographed for some women's magazine as an illustration of consummate interior decorating and spotless housekeeping.

Mrs. Murphy's complexion has the freshness of a woman half her age. There is not a gray hair in her brown head and casual acquaintances have often mistaken her for one of her daughters. Strangers have refused to believe that she had 23 grandchildren.

Of her living children, ten are girls and four, boys. Eight of the girls are married. All four boys, because of their inherited love for the sea, served in the Navy during the World War II— three in the Canadian and one in the American.

Each winter Mr. and Mrs. Murphy leave their home in Alberton to visit the United States where two of their daughters and one son are married. They have visited the World's Fair at New York, and have seen, among many other interesting sights, George Washington's home at Mount Vernon. "Aust" has even dropped into Tony Galento's bar-room, has shaken hands with Tony and has listened to the "beer barrel" telling how he could have "moidered dat bum"—meaning Joe Louis.

But no one envies "Aust" his annual holiday to the "States." As I said before, 50 years is a long time. It is especially a long time to have been pulling lobster traps from the rock-strewn fishing bottom off North Cape Reef. Only those who have fished there know anything of the heart-breaking effort involved. And they do not talk about it—much. Their satisfaction, welling up from an inner consciousness that theirs is a man's job, is all the praise they want.

And so when men such as they meet men like "Aust," a smile steals over their weather-beaten faces and a gleam comes into their eyes as they move over.

That is all.

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For UPSET Stomach • Nervous Indigestion • Heartburn • After-eating distresses • Simple Diarrhoea

Every day more people discover with happy surprise how gentle Pepto-Besmal is in relieving a stomach that is upset through over-eating or from eating something which makes a stomach "talk back."

NEVER UPSET AN UPSET STOMACH

Never add to the distress of an upset stomach with harsh treatment. Avoid the use of drastic antacids and physics. A sick stomach should be treated gently. Use gentle, soothing Pepto-Besmal.

● HOW YOU SHOULD TREAT AN UPSET STOMACH

Stomachs are tender organs in the body—and when they are upset they should be treated tenderly. Upset stomachs are usually irritated and, therefore, the treatment for upset stomach should be gentle. Pepto-Besmal spreads a soothing coating over the irritated stomach and intestinal walls. Pepto-Besmal quiets an excited stomach.

● WHAT CAUSES UPSET STOMACH?

Common upset stomach is caused by irregular living. Sometimes it may be over-eating, or eating ill-prepared, hasty meals. There may be other causes, too. Car, sea or air sickness, nervous excitement, overtiredness or excesses in smoking and drinking all can be the cause of an upset stomach.

● WHAT PEPTO-BESMAL DOES

Pepto-Besmal spreads a soothing coating over stomach and intestinal walls to quiet and restore peace to an angry stomach. It is effective for such forms of stomach upset as nervous indigestion, heartburn, simple diarrhoea. Pepto-Besmal retards the formation of gas, sweetens sour stomach and relieves nausea.

● WHAT IS PEPTO-BESMAL?

Pepto-Besmal is a stomach-soothing preparation of a high pharmaceutical standard, developed with greatest care to assure relief from common forms of upset stomach. It contains Bismuth Subsalicylate, Salol, Zinc Pheno-sulphonate and Methyl salicylate in a demulcent base. All these are ingredients which your druggist or doctor will tell you are mild and soothing to a stomach and intestinal tissues. These ingredients have been compounded to make a truly pleasant-tasting formula to relieve common forms of upset stomach. Pepto-Besmal is neither a laxative nor an antacid.

● WHY PEPTO-BESMAL MUST BE GOOD

For forty years in the United States, every applicable piece of pharmaceutical research has been incorporated into the compounding of Pepto-Besmal. Spotless laboratories in the home of Pepto-Besmal are making tests constantly to assure uniformity and high standards. Through years of constant improvements, the makers of Pepto-Besmal know that their vast experience and great care in maintaining the highest standards for their product have been factors which have brought relief to millions of upset stomach sufferers.

● WHO CAN USE PEPTO-BESMAL?

Pepto-Besmal is of such a high standard of pharmaceutical excellence that it's use is not restricted to adults. Because of the soothing properties of Pepto-Besmal, children or adults find equal relief from common forms of upset stomach. Pepto-Besmal contains no sugar and, therefore, can be used by diabetics without fear of upsetting the carbohydrate (sugar-making) balance of their systems.

● WHO IS USING PEPTO-BESMAL?

Every year more than ten million bottles of Pepto-Besmal are being used. Whole families have come to rely upon this soothing, pleasant-tasting formula to get comfort from simple forms of upset stomach. The high rate of public acceptance of Pepto-Besmal has made it the fastest growing preparation of its kind. This can be assurance that Pepto-Besmal can and does meet the requirements for which it was compounded.

● A SPECIAL THOUGHT FOR CHILDREN

Too often giving children "something out of a bottle" is a struggle—for children have had many experiences with "nasty" medicines. Pepto-Besmal has been made an inviting pink color—and Pepto-Besmal has a pleasant taste. Pepto-Besmal is safe and effective to quiet upset stomach in children.

● WHO ARE THE MAKERS OF PEPTO-BESMAL?

Pepto-Besmal is made by the Norwich Pharmacal Company. For more than forty years, Norwich has been a leader in its special field of pharmaceutical development. Every employee is a specialist. Through extensive programs of research and tests of products-in-the-making, Pepto-Besmal and other Norwich product are always uniform and of highest standard.

Three sizes at your druggist, 50c, $1.00, $1.50 or by the dose at his fountain.

If you don't get prompt relief consult your physician.

Norwich A NORWICH PRODUCT 54-46

PEPTO-BESMAL FOR UPSET STOMACH

Lachlan, Mr. and Mrs. Lloyd Prouse Great Village, Mr. and Mrs. Stanley Newman, Prince Edward Island, Mr. and Mrs. Blanchard Morrell, parents of the groom and Mrs. M. Morrell, grandmother of the groom; Dr. and Mrs. Young, Kentville.

NEW DIVISIONAL AGENT NAMED

MONCTON, N. B., Apl. 30 —An announcement is made of the appointment of J. A. Breau as division freight and district passenger agent, Canadian National Railways, at Campbellton, N. B., effective May 1st. Vice Edwin Desrosiers, transferred, announcement being made by J. H. Norton, regional traffic manager.

Mr. Breau was formerly general agent, passenger department, at Saint John, N. B.

Joseph Alyre Breau was born at Buctouche, N.B., and entered the service of the railway as a junior clerk in the passenger department at Moncton, July, 1916. He was made clerk in August 1917, refunding clerk April 1924 and travelling passenger agent in January 1930. In September 1938 he was appointed chief rate clerk and in December 1940 general clerk. He was appointed general agent at Saint John on July 3, 1944.

MORRELL - PROUSE WEDDING

St. Andrew's Church, Halifax, was the scene of a pretty wedding this week when Rev. Harvey Denton united in marriage, Miss Sarah Eleanor Prouse, youngest daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Stanley A. Prouse, Great Village, to Glenn MacNeil Morrell, son of Mr. and Mrs. Blanchard Morrell, Freeport, Nova Scotia.

The bride was given in marriage by her father and wore a floor-length gown of white satin with a sweetheart neckline and long sleeves pointed over the wrists. Her long veil was held in place by a coronet of orange blossoms and she carried a bouquet of red roses.

Her sister, Mrs. Muir McLachlan, was matron-of-honor and wore a gown of blue sheer with a matching shoulder-length veil held in place by a halo of pink flowers. She carried a bouquet of talisman roses and pink carnations.

Larry Irving was best man and the ushers were John Cameron and David Nichol.

Miss Betty Duff, R.N., was soloist and sang "I'll Walk Beside You," accompanied at the organ by Ethyl Hicks.

Mrs. Prouse was attired in a soft grey ensemble with which she wore black accessories and a corsage of pink roses while Mrs. Morrell was attired in a costume of blue crepe with which she wore black accessories and a corsage of red roses.

A reception was held later at the Lord Nelson Hotel where Mr. Denton proposed the toast to the bride.

For a motor trip through the province, the bride wore a grey wool crepe suit with a rose three-quarter length coat and black accessories. They will reside in Halifax on their return where Mr. Morrell is on the staff of the Bank of Nova Scotia, North and Agricola Street branch. The bride, a graduate of the Victoria General Hospital, has been on the staff there for the past three years.

Out-of-town guests attending the Morrell - Prouse wedding which was solemnized Wednesday evening in St. Andrew's Church by Rev. Harvey Denton were the bride's parents, Mr. and Mrs. Stanley A. Prouse, Mr. and Mrs. Muir McLachlan, Mr. and Mrs. Lloyd Prouse Great Village, Mr. and Mrs. Stanley Newman, Prince Edward Island, Mr. and Mrs. Blanchard Morrell, parents of the groom and Mrs. M. Morrell, grandmother of the groom; Dr. and Mrs. Young, Kentville.

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You get MORE because TREND is CONCENTRATED!

TREND is the modern wonder washer! TREND cuts grease — makes dishes and glasses SPARKLE — leaves no greasy ring in your dishpan. TREND is safe and gentle for woollens and lingerie because it is so efficient — even in cool water. TREND is amazingly economical . . . 16 full ounces in the small, convenient, easy-to-handle package. Ask your grocer or chain store for TREND — the modern magic wonder washer — TODAY!

TREND is Economical — use only ⅓ as much as soap!

TREND is kind to Hands helps keep them soft and lovely!

TREND is Odourless —no perfumed scent, no sneezes!

TREND Cuts Grease — works miracles even in hard or cool water!

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