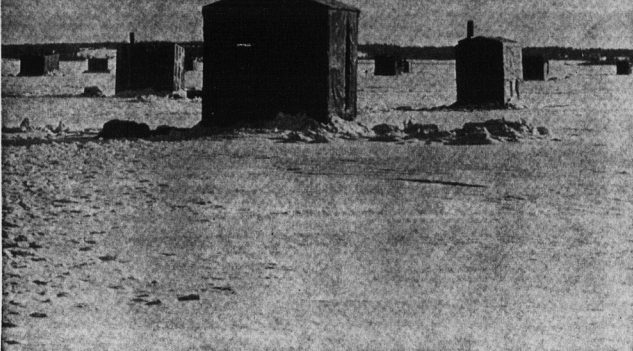


FOR REAL COOL TYPES ONLY

Fishing is not always for profit; elusive smelt provides winter's fun



TYPICAL WINTER SCENE ON NORTH RIVER: SHACKS DOT ICE SURFACE

Patience pays off in heavy catches

Want to have some top sport—and get a good meal at the same time? Try sport fishing for smelts through the ice. Man, it's real cool!

In harbors, bays and on countless rivers across the Island, smelt shacks have appeared—but the smelt themselves so far this season, have failed to appear in any great quantity. Commercial fishermen are not having much luck and the bait nets are coming up light except during special sides when reasonably good catches have been reported.

The shacks, which apparently spring up like magic when word gets around that the smelts are running, are the simplest form of housing, with the possible exception of sod shanties. A few pieces of two-by-four, any old boxes or crates, some tar paper and a few bits of lath are all that is needed. After that it is simply a matter of a little work with a hammer and some nails.

Smelts shacks are scattered all along the Charlottetown waterfront with a large number between Hillsborough Bridge and Falconwood Point. The greatest concentration of them is along the North River as usual. Starting at the breakwater by Government Pond out to Port Edward and beginning again at the range light they run all the way to Lewis Point (more properly May Point). It is opposite this shore that the largest number are grouped with more than 20 individual shacks in the area.

Age is no barrier to this particular sport and fishermen range in years from the teens to the seventies. And females are not unknown. The shacks also serve as club houses and many discussions are heard on the merits of various methods of catching smelts. The spear is generally favored over the line as when the smelt is heavy too much time is lost taking the fish off the hook. With a spear only a snap of the wrist is required to drop the fish in a pool or on the ice beside the hole.

Some enterprising youngsters operate a home industry on a small scale by selling their catch from door to door at a price several cents per pound under the retail price in city stores. They get the benefit of after-school sport along with extra pocket money. Sometimes their sales are increased by virtue of the catches of other fishermen out purely for the sport and not interested in eating their fish.

However, the would-be fisherman need not imagine that just because he has a shack and a spear he is going to get smelts, even if they are there. Refraction of light through the water frequently makes things seem what they ain't and a clear smelt at a smelt more often than not results in a clean miss by several inches.

'Changing with times' provides good future

Hall and Stavert Ltd. is a firm whose products and workmanship are appreciated abroad as well as at home. They are one of the main suppliers of fishing gear to Island fishermen. Founded in 1934 by Stanley Stavert and Harold Hall, the firm produces a variety of machines and machine parts specializing in the manufacture of shafting, propellers, stuffing boxes for lobster boats as well as similar equipment for draggers. It is the largest manufacturer of its type in the Maritimes and operates a plant on lower Journal street and a foundry on Elm Avenue in Charlottetown.

It may be considered a reversal of the trend, but Charles B. Crawford, secretary and manager, states that approximately 75 per cent of the products turned out are exported. Chief markets are in the Maritimes and Newfoundland, but goods have been shipped to Montreal and Toronto in Canada and as far West as Winnipeg. Hall and Stavert do not confine their activities to the fishing industry. They manufacture jet pumps and freight conveyors, some of which are used in packing plants around the province. Mr. Crawford feels there is a good future for the firm providing it keeps pace with the times and continual changing conditions.

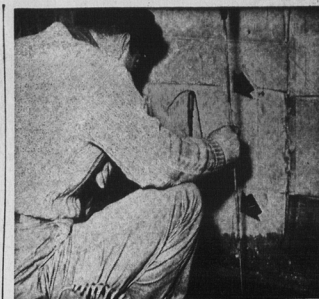
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20 DRAGGERS

Continued From Page One
A dragger landing fish in Souris. There are two sizes of draggers being used at the present time, a 60-foot affair with a capacity of up to 75,000 pounds, and a 65 footer, with a capacity of up to 100,000. All of these boats carry a five man crew, and are equipped to stay out fishing for a week or 10 days at a time.

Each of these plants has a payroll of about 100 persons, with a total payroll for each of between a quarter and a half-million dollars. This means that approximately 200 persons realize their living directly from the dragger fleet. That is not counting families of those people employed.

The draggers must be supplied with fuel, ice, food, gear, etc., and this is supplied by various merchants and dealers in the town. The amount of money in this regard would be in the vicinity of \$300,000 a season. This money helps the businesses of the town, and helps support the payrolls of these businesses.

The first 12 working days of the present year, saw one plant being forced to work overtime on five occasions in order to keep up with the fish landings. Even at that, they were forced to send one of their boats to another plant. It is highly probable unfortunately, that the present rate of fish landings will not continue.

Each year, the first few weeks see the landings high, but this gradually tapers off. Then in the summer, there is a slack spell, in which almost no fish are taken. Fishing in the fall, depends almost entirely on weather conditions. With the excellent start of the present season, a fairly good fall could mean that this season will see the most poundage of fish ever landed in Souris by the dragger fleet.

The year 1963 is starting in a manner that could mean the biggest year for the Souris dragger fleet, since the fleet first came into existence. The first week of the present season saw the boats land in the vicinity of 20,000 to 40,000 pounds of fish each per trip. While these totals are far from spectacular, it sounds quite reasonable, when one realizes 30,000 and 70,000 pounds a trip.

Sport fishing is long enjoyed in province

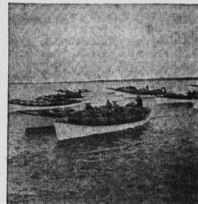
Sport fishing has long been an enjoyable pastime on the Island. From Osquod's "The Maritime Provinces," Boston, 1881 comes this interesting little item extolling the abundance and size of sea trout:

"The sea trout fishing in the bays and harbors of Prince Edward Island, especially in June, when the fish first rush in from the Gulf, is really magnificent. They average 3 to 5 pounds each. I found the best fishing at St. Peter's Bay, on the north side of the Island, about 25 miles from Charlottetown. I there killed in one morning 16 trout, which weighed 80 pounds. In the bays and along the coasts of the Island they are taken with scarlet fly, from a boat under easy sail, with a 'mackerel breeze', and sometimes a heavy ground swell. The fly skips from wave to wave at the end of 30 yards of line, and there should be at least 70 yards more on the reel. It is splendid sport, as a strong fish will make sometimes a long run, and give a good chase down the wind."

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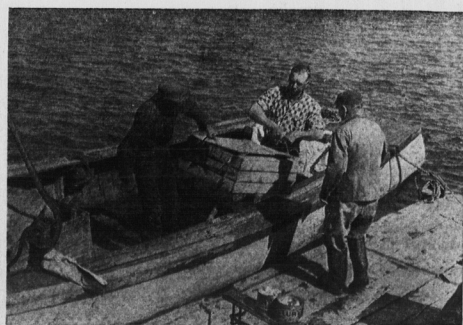
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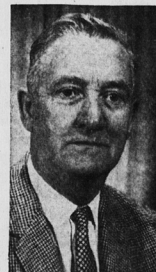
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