

**THIRTY-FOURTH REPORT OF  
COMMISSIONER OF SEA AND  
SHORE FISHERIES. STATE  
OF MAINE, 1915 AND 1916**

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Thirty-fourth Report of Commissioner of Sea and Shore Fisheries. State of Maine, 1915 and 1916  
by Wm. Brennan

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**WM. BRENNAN**

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Shore Fisheries

STATE OF MAINE

1915 and 1916



WATERVILLE  
SENTINEL PUBLISHING COMPANY  
1917

STATE OF MAINE.

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DEPARTMENT OF SEA AND SHORE FISHERIES,  
PORT CLYDE, MAINE, December 27, 1916.

*To His Excellency Oakley C. Curtis, Governor of Maine:*

I herewith submit as required by law, the thirty-fourth report of Commissioner of Sea and Shore Fisheries for the year ending November 30th, 1916.

Respectfully,

WM. BRENNAN,  
*Commissioner.*

319560

#### OYSTERS.

Oysters have been planted for experimental purposes for the past two years and have kept fairly well through our long winters and came out with excellent flavor. While we would not expect to propagate oysters in Maine waters extensively, we can fatten them and plump them up to a heavy and delicate flavor, as reports come from Southern New England dealers.

Oysters taken from other waters and planted on Maine grounds seem to take on the high shellfish taste of all the Maine products of that kind.

The Department has experimented with the native Maine oyster now growing at Sheepscot bridge, taking them into the Damariscotta river for two months only and have improved them wonderfully in this short time. This river probably has the best grade of oyster feed in it of any place on the Maine coast, if not the New England coast, but our short summers cut down the growth to about two-thirds of that of Rhode Island and Connecticut oysters. However, people are safe to fatten and flavor oysters in Maine waters, if they choose to do so, with safety.

#### SCALLOPS.

The Maine coast sea scallop seems to be fast leaving our bays. There must be some cause for this. Investigation in 1913-1914 shows a very few spawn scallops on the several grounds between Mt. Desert and Portland.

The scallop can shift grounds if they choose and I think when fished on to a certain extent, they prefer new grounds, and another reason is that shelling on the grounds or dressing any fish on the fishing grounds has always proven injurious to its own kind.

#### FLOUNDERS.

Of recent years the flounders, or flat fish, as called in some of the Western markets, has been taken in large quantities by the use of the otter trawl, an original English pattern of fishing gear.

The demand for this fish at certain times of year is somewhat large and the price ranges fair to high in Boston and New York markets.

During the winter of 1916 considerable large catches were made in Casco bay and many other places along the Maine coast, for which extra good prices were received.

A description of the otter trawl is as follows: A board, three feet long by twenty inches wide, ballast with weight enough to sink it is used at each arm of the net or trawl. The opening across the mouth of this trawl for small boat work is from 20 to 30 feet with net extending back about the same length as opening. This gear is dragged at slow speed for several hundred yards for each haul.

Usually the work is hard and the fishermen engaged in this industry earn their money by the sweat of their brow.

This industry promises to increase from year to year, as new grounds are being discovered all along the Maine coast.

#### THE OTTER TRAWL OFF SHORE FISHING.

This industry has now operating on this side the Atlantic, approximately twelve steamers from New York, Boston and Portland and are doing a profitable business.

Portland has two large steamers which have operated for the past three years and have beaten the world's record catching ground fish. Some of the fishing grounds frequented by these steamers are Georges and Western Banks, also the South Channel, lying between Georges Banks and Nantucket Shoals.

It was thought at first that this method of catching fish would work disastrous to the fishing grounds, but after ten years of continuous work winter and summer on the above named grounds, getting the largest catches within the last three years, the question is State open for discussion relative to this matter.

Many dealers say that the market really needs this fleet, as they can depend upon their coming to market as often as every week no matter what the weather may be, but time will solve the problem probably better than any tribunal now in session.

#### QUAHAUGS OR LITTLE NECK CLAMS.

This industry has been laying dormant for many years, yet we have right here in the State of Maine one of the highest



grades of these goods to be found on the New England coast, as reported by several dealers.

Our territory is not extensive nor does it yield heavily, but to encourage this industry by cultivation, we surely could supply all of our Maine markets with this product.

The little neck clam is a toothsome morsel and commands good prices wherever used and like all other Maine shellfish, finds first place in the markets. They have been introduced somewhat by the Department of Sea and Shore Fisheries for the past two years and have been highly recommended as a shellfish product.

#### THE BLUE MUSCLE.

The blue muscle is slowly but surely coming to the front as an article of food for Maine people especially. This quite delicious molusk has for centuries been considered worthless except for fish bait but sometimes fish are wise I think, but the blue muscle comes very close to the oyster for food.

The Department has done some little work this year to encourage this shell fish to be used for food. In these high times of living, I think we should conserve every possible means of sustenance, in these present days especially. Let us hope that the people of Maine avail themselves of this opportunity of getting the most and best out of Maine waters and shellfish grounds that they can at most reasonable prices, that we may add another industry to the fishing interest of Maine.

#### CLAMS.

The clam industry on the Maine coast is of much importance and nets several hundred thousand dollars usually, but much of the grounds have become badly depleted for several reasons. Excessive digging comes first, as no such product can supply when overworked. Also another reason is that clams are taken to such a small size that not seed enough is left in the flats to warrant the next crop.

Clam grounds should be cultivated like a garden to a certain extent. If they are expected to produce from time to time, seed from distant places along the coast should be exchanged and mixed, which will act the same as a garden or flocks so as

not to become inbred. Investigation of conditions has shown this very plainly. More care should be taken of this industry to keep it at a higher productive standard than heretofore.

It has been much overworked and neglected. Good market clams are hard to get and every State in New England is calling for them, especially Maine clams, for they are extra good flavor and much in demand. Something should be done to further promote and preserve this industry. I would advise clam cultivation individually or statewide publicly.

PROVIDING AND OPERATING PATROL BOATS.

Balance March 7, 1916 .....	\$2,024 25
Total expenditures .....	2,024 25

PAY OF WARDENS AND EXPENSES OF WARDENS AND COMMISSIONER

Balance March 7, 1916 .....	\$15,385 16
Fines and licenses from March to December 27th inclusive .....	3,594 03
	<hr/>
	\$18,979 19
Total expenditures from March to December 27th inclusive .....	18,961 16
	<hr/>
Balance .....	\$18 03

PROTECTION OF LOBSTERS WITH EGGS ATTACHED MARCH 4.

Appropriation .....	\$3,475 58
Appropriation purchasing for liberation.....	5,000 00
	<hr/>
	\$8,475 58
Stripped lobsters delivered to State by hatchery, 28,456 lbs. ....	\$4,574 02
Seed lobsters delivered to State by hatchery, 20,037 lbs. ....	6,590 55
Lobsters liberated by State, 5,146 lbs. ....	1,543 80

VIOLATORS.	Fine Imposed.	Collected.	DISPOSITION.
Stephen F. Walker, Cliff Island, Me. ....	8 00	8 00	Paid.
Forrest Springer, Trenton, Me. ....	10 00	-	Sentence suspended.
Charles Davis, Jr., Trenton, Me. ....	10 00	-	Sentence suspended.
George Davis, Trenton, Me. ....	10 00	-	Sentence suspended.
Alfred Jones & Sons, Bangor, Me. ....	38 00	-	By recommendation of Warden fine was cancelled.
American Express Co. ....	-	-	By recommendation of Warden fine was cancelled.
Jones Sanitary Mkt. Co., Bangor, Me. ....	17 00	-	By recommendation of Warden fine was cancelled.
H. E. Wentworth, Bangor, Me. ....	-	-	By recommendation of Warden fine was cancelled.
R. O. Weare, York Beach, Me. ....	25 00	-	Sentence suspended.
S. A. Skillings & Son, Portland, Me. ....	10 00	-	Sentence suspended.
W. L. Bailey, Harpwell, Me. ....	16 00	15 00	Paid.
Reuben Brewer, Boothbay, Me. ....	12 00	12 00	Paid.
William Robson, Bath, Me. ....	37 00	37 00	Paid.
William Colby, Rockland, Me. ....	20 00	10 00	Paid.
Charles Anderson, Sebasteo, Me. ....	-	-	Taken before Court. Appealed.
Herbert L. Pys, Sebasteo, Me. ....	-	-	Taken before Court. Appealed.
John H. Murphy, Sebasteo, Me. ....	-	-	Taken before Court. Appealed.
E. F. Bramhall & Co., Belfast, Me. ....	1 00	1 00	Paid.
Perry's Cash Market, Belfast, Me. ....	1 00	1 00	Paid.
E. R. Witham, Rockland, Me. ....	20 00	20 00	Paid.
Mrs. Moulton, Scarboro, Me. ....	45 00	45 00	Paid.
Fred Partridge, New Harbor, Me. ....	15 00	15 00	Paid.
Raymond Dobbin, Jonesport, Me. ....	10 00	10 00	Paid.
Horace Williams, Boothbay Harbor, Me. ....	5 00	5 00	Paid.
C. L. Wallace, Broad Cove, Me. ....	18 00	-	Pending.
William Farnham, Boothbay Harbor, Me. ....	9 00	9 00	Paid.
L. D. LeBlanc, Boston, Mass. ....	178 00	100 00	Paid.
A. F. Ramedell, Bar Harbor, Me. ....	10 00	10 00	Paid.
Fred W. Studley, Wells, Me. ....	49 00	-	Taken before Court. Fine remitted.
G. H. Coleman, York Harbor, Me. ....	158 00	158 00	Paid.
George W. Hatch, Wells, Me. ....	114 00	-	Taken before Court. Fine remitted.
James W. Pennell, Harpwell, Me. ....	15 00	-	Taken before Court. Appealed.
Hartford Lunt, Boothbay Harbor, Me. ....	16 00	16 00	Paid.
John L. Dyer, Cliff Island, Me. ....	5 00	5 00	Paid.