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## GREATEST SHAD FISHERY IN THE WORLD.

BY COL. FRED A. OLDS.

About the year 1800 William Capehart, a great planter, living on the shores of Albemarle Sound established what has become the greatest shad fishery in the world, which is now operated by his great grandson of the same name. The location is picturesque in the extreme and in a section where history has been made in the past 250 years, for very near the place the provincial legislature or council of North Carolina met in 1660, under a wide spreading tree, which still stands.

This great fishery is at the head of Albemarle sound, a wide stretch of yellow water, nowhere deep, and is known as the "Avoca" fishery. It is within sight, across Edenton bay, of the quaint old town of the latter name, and also in sight of the United States shad hatchery, which occupies the buildings on the estate known a century and a half ago as "Buncombe Hall" which was the home of that Edward Buncombe who gave rise to the now familiar phrase "talking now for Buncombe". This upper part of Albemarle sound forms a wide sweep and into it pours the waters of the Cashie, the Roanoke, and Pungo rivers. It was up the Roanoke river in a corn field that the Confederates built their noted ram, the "Albemarle", which came down the stream with only one side fully armored and with the blacksmiths working upon it and at the quaint old town of Plymouth co-operated with the Confederate land forces, which had been rushed there from the seat of war in Northern Virginia; the place with its garrison of 8,000 federals being captured, the ram keeping one side always toward the federal fleet, the vessel of which it sunk or disabled.

The beach at the fishery is low, flat and rather narrow, and the yellow water breaks in ripples upon it. There along the shores, is a vast low house, like a shed, with a sloping front of stout wooden planks, to which the seine is drawn by steam turn windlasses or drums. Out in the water lie two side-wheel steamers, with no upper works, but with wide platforms, on each of which is piled a mass of seine three quarters of a mile on each vessel. At a signal these boats steam out into the sound side by side, and half a mile from one shore separate and steam parallel with it, dropping or "sinking" the seine into the water when turn and make a wide circle for the beach. The seine is a mile and a half long and it has at each end a rope. This is carried through shallow water to one of the drums or windlasses and then the strain begins as the great seine is drawn in. In the old days slave power was used to turn these drums, and also in manning the great sweeps or "stands" of the boats; each was 30 feet long, pulled by four men, who timed the stroke to the song or chant of a negro who walked the deck, these singers being regarded as very important men and having special privileges. As the seine is drawn in, men go out in boats outside of it, and drop shorter seines, designed to pick it, that is to reinforce it in case it should be broken by the

rush of large fish. Within the crescent of the seine other men go in boats, armed with three-tined gigs or grains, which they throw at the sturgeons, which attain a great size and which are wanted for their eggs and also for their flesh; both being in great request. There is a desire to kill them not only for this purpose but to prevent them from breaking the seine. Sometimes the excited blacks, after sinking their grains or gigs deep into a sturgeon, will jump upon him and have a great struggle in the bloody water.

As the seine is drawn in and the space within it contracted, interest is at the highest pitch. The water is like a gigantic whirl pool, this being due to the myriads of fish, which dart from the water and leap in all directions, so that they look like silver in the sunlight. The boats which "shot" the seine have come into the beach on either side and their hard working crews have rushed to one of the buildings to get their "dram of grog", by which is meant so stiff a drink of corn whiskey as to floor an ordinary man in a jiffy. Then they lend a hand. On the beach negroes, with flaming turbans, skirts tucked up, and sharp knives in hand, are ready for business. Suddenly the drums cease to revolve, for the seine, looking like a gigantic sausage, is on the verge of the sloped planking. Into the water dash a score of men and with a mighty heave, to an old tune, lustily sung, roll in the seine and the fish it holds. The woodengates on the outside flash up with a snap and there between them and the floor of the old fish house are perhaps 200,000 fish. The "spawners" pass instantly into the hands of the United States fish commission men, who take the eggs in trays and then handle the "millets". Then the shad are hustled into packing boxes, where they are iced, fixed for shipment to the great northern markets, hurried to a waiting steamer belonging to the fishery, and taken to Edenton and loaded into express cars and the next day are on the table in many a hotel, cafe, club room and home, for these fish, from the fishery are famous famous for their size and flavor. Meantime the herrings, caught up in tubs, have been tumbled out on the cutting boards, where, according to the size of the fish and their sex, the women prepare them. The roe herrings are saved entire, the others being beheaded and cleaned, and both classes go into the building and are put in a pickle or brine, in what are known as "stands" each holding 4,000 fish. Then they go into kits or small barrels and are shipped all over the United States.

During all these operations there is the sound of singing. The wind seems to blow there all the time, the moss-covered roofs of the numerous buildings and the long and pendulous moss or tillandsia waves in the breeze, and if the weather be cool there are roaring fires on the beach. The work never stops. It requires four hours to shoot and haul the seine, so that there are six of these operations every 24 hours. In huts, very stoutly built, near the great fish houses, are tires of bunks, and in these the night crew of beachmen and boatmen and fish women sleep during the day soundly amid all the noise. Since babyhood they have lived in this atmosphere.

Some of them used to be slaves, and nearly all are the children or grandchildren of former slaves, who stood loyally by the Capeharts, whose fish mansion stands on a little bluff somewhat back from the beach, overlooking many a noble acre of farm and many a mile of broad water, as yellow as gold. To the negroes the handsome young owner of the estate and fishery is always "Marse William", as he is devoted to these black people and they to him. On the beams inside the fish house from which a shelter, supported by great beams reaches as far out, only to the water's edge, have been marked the "record catches" for each season for more than a hundred years. Of shad

the largest haul was in round numbers 7,000, and in herring 220,000. Of sturgeon there have been caught in a season over three thousand and many years ago, before the foreign demand for this fish and its roe became so great, they used to be, like many other fish, hauled up on the farms and used for fertilizer, as there was no demand for them.

It has been an old custom in that country to use the fish just as they are for fertilizer and a phrase often heard in that community is "a herring to the hill" of corn. Now the sturgeon are sent to market, the eggs taken from them are packed in special cans with a certain amount of oil and shipped all over the world; notably to Russia.

The Capeharts are among the grand seigniors in that noble section of North Carolina. In the old town of Edenton, which is now almost like it was in the time before the Revolution, every house of any pretensions has its door knocker. In the court house where the second floor was built for a ball room, King William IV danced when an English midshipman, and hard by is the great estate known as "Hayes"; where the mansion is one of the most beautiful and noted in the whole United States. It was the home of Samuel Johnston, the friend of Joseph Hewes, of Edenton, the first secretary of the United States navy, and under the roof of "Hayes" John Paul Jones was a guest when he got his commission in the newly created navy of the United States, with him being Samuel Johnston, the owner of "Hayes", and Hewes' fiancée, the beautiful Isabella Johnston, and Wiley Jones the patron and devoted friend of John Paul Jones; the latter having for love of his patron changed his name from John Paul to John Paul Jones; he and a rich and influential Wiley Jones and his brother Allen having ridden through the country from Halifax county, along the Roanoke river, to a point near Avoca and there taking boats for Edenton. As a matter of fact Samuel Johnston was the ninth earl of Annandale, but he preferred to be an American gentleman rather than a Scotch Earl. So there, in sight of Avoca and the wide reach of Albemarle sound; of Edenton at hand, and the further southern shore, the health of John Paul Jones was drunk by the company and the young naval officer rode away to New York to begin a life of fame, caring and devotion.

The old mansion at "Hayes" named for the home of Sir Walter Raleigh, in England, was for 105 years owned and occupied by Samuel Johnston, who built it,

and James C. Johnston, his son, the latter having no heir, never having married. It was his heart's desire that his heir should be James Johnston Pettigrew, his namesake, an officer of the regular army and a member of a great family with branches in North and South Carolina, and when the civil war was at hand he begged Pettigrew to abandon his military career, not to enter the Confederate army, never to take up arms against the United States, and to assume the care of the great estate of Hayes. Johnston had 3,000 slaves and more than 50,000 acres of land and was by far the richest man in the entire South, in fact, among the richest in the United States but Pettigrew was adamant itself and declared that he must and would resign his commission and enter the Confederate army, saying he saw only success ahead of the South. Johnston with tears in his eyes told him that the south's defence was a barren hope, and implored him for the sake of every association to stand by the old flag. Pettigrew rose to be a brigadier general, and was killed in one of the terrible charges at Gettysburg, where his men went further into the Federal lines than others of the fierce fighting men in gray, at that high water mark of the Confederacy.

Years passed; the civil war was almost ended; of the Johnston slaves only three remained, and one night a little before Robert E. Lee's surrender some renegade whites from Edenton, too cowardly to be in either army, broke into Hayes' and actually assaulted the paralyzed gentleman who sat in his chair, looking mournfully at the great men of America, who had been the

ds. of his father and of himself, which adorned the walls. The plunderers were after money and the rare liquors in the cellar, some a century old. Edenton, fortunately, was like Mt. Vernon, the home of Washington, a place respected by both armies, and never plundered, and for Johnston the greatest respect was shown by both sides. On this particular night a federal gunboat lay at the wharf at Edenton a hundred yards from the scene of the robbery. One of the faithful servants ran to the town, saw the gunboat and told the story to an officer of the vessel, who instantly sent a file of men, who doubt quickened by the black man to "Hayes". On reaching there they heard the smashing of bottles by the miscreants in the cellar and running thither dragged out the fellows, took them a few hundred yards from the place and there shot them to death, quite near one flank of the long line of the then empty slave cottages, known as the "Quarter line", leaving their bodies under the drooping branches of the great live oaks, draped in gray moss and on the very shore of one of the deep and black streams which thread that region. The officer in charge of the men from the gunboat simply made a verbal report as to what he had done and that was the last of it. A little while later Mr. Johnston died, and in his will left his property to a man who had for a number of years been the manager of the great estate. Now railway trains, crossing Albemarle sound on a viaduct over five miles long, pass directly in front of the mansion at Hayes, and between it and the shining waters of state-

## BLACKGUARDING THE NAVY.

In 1863, Gideon Welles, President Lincoln's Secretary of the Navy, recorded in his diary that:

When the first turret vessel, the Monitor, was building, many naval men and men in the shipping interest sneered at her as a humbug and at me as no sailor or judge, until she vindicated her power and worth in that first remarkable conflict.

Then I was abused by party men because I had not made preparations for and built more. There is constant caprice in regard to the navy.

Secretary Welles' experience was not unlike Secretary Daniels'. Everything is wrong and the more it succeeds the worse it is.

No other member of President Lincoln's Cabinet was so habitually and variously assailed as Gideon Welles, who was probably the best Secretary of the Navy the country has ever known. The United States under his administration built up the largest and most efficient navy it has ever had, a navy that revolutionized marine warfare and has never yet received full credit for all its remarkable achievements in the Civil War or for its vast contributions to the victory of the North.

The United States now has the greatest and most efficient navy that it has ever had. The appropriations made for it by the Sixty-third Congress were the largest ever made for naval purposes. In his recent letter to President Garfield of Williams College, Secretary Daniels showed that there are now thirty-six more ships in commission than when he took office, with seventy-seven vessels, including nine dreadnoughts and thirty-eight submarines, under construction or authorized.

The personnel of the navy has been increased by 5,824, the total now being 4,355 officers and enlisted men. With an increase of 12 per cent in the enlisted strength, desertions have decreased 17 per cent.

The number of mines has been increased 244 per cent. in two years. The number of torpedoes has been increased 90 per cent., and the cost of manufacturing torpedoes has been reduced from \$4,202.11 each to \$3,245.72 each, the total saving being \$326,700. As against 12 submarines, costing \$7,958,936, which were authorized under the Taft Administration, 26 submarines, costing \$16,280,000, have been authorized under the first half of the Wilson Administration. In addition, \$1,000,000 was appropriated for aviation purposes.

Much of this increase has been obtained without cost to the country. Mr. Daniels shows that \$1,110,084 has been saved in the purchase of armor-plate alone,

ly Albemarle sound, which has been so much of American history in the making, for at its mouth there lies Roanoke Island, where the first settlement of Englishmen upon this continent was made in 1584, under the auspices of Sir Walter Raleigh, the fort built by the colonists yet remaining clear as to outline.

that in two other bureaus. \$1,800,000 was saved last year. The cost of making powder has been reduced to 2.7 cents a lb. and \$150,000 saved on that one item. Based upon former prices for guns, there is saving in that of \$208,425.33.

Yet the Secretary of the Navy is still abused like a pickpocket, and is virtually charged with murder by both Representative Gardner and former Secretary Meyer.

When Admiral Fiske in a fit of pique resigned as Chief of Operations, the critics of the Secretary unanimously insisted that the wreck of the navy was complete. Secretary Daniels has now made Capt. Benson Chief of Naval Operations under the new act, and nobody can be found to deny that Capt. Benson is one of the ablest and most competent officers in the service. Nevertheless, the campaign against Secretary Daniels proceeds with as much virulence as did the campaign against Secretary Welles. Not satisfied with assailing the Secretary personally, there seems to be a well organized program to incite the navy itself to revolt against the civil authority that controls it, or against any civil authority to control it.

How much of this is party politics and how much of it is armor-plate, fighting for swollen profits nobody knows, but the campaign reflects little credit upon the patriotism of the men responsible for it.

This is a poor time to blackguard the United States navy.—From an Editorial in Friday's New York World.

## A BUSY FIRST MONDAY.

Monday was a busy day in Warrenton. The Commissioners of the Board of Education, the Township Road Commission, the County Road Supervisors, the County Assessors met, and were busy all day, and His Honor, Judge Rodwell presided over his usual number of Monday morning dock et.

A large number of citizens gathered seeking relief from the Dog tax, and all in all, the day was a busy one.

## TOWN ELECTION.

The Town election passed off quietly Monday.

A larger vote than usual was cast, and we are pleased to say that not a single vote was scratched. Warrenton, in this respect, has set a good example to the County Democracy,—the Primary settled the matter, and all good democrats abided the decision and cast their votes in the Election in accordance with the will of the Primary.

Mr. John W. Allen was elected Mayor, and the same Commissioners hereto serving the Town.

We congratulate the town on a progressive Board and with concerted effort to advance the Town's material welfare, we see no reason why Warrenton should not continue to improve in every way.

## WHOLE FAMILY DEPENDENT.

Mr. E. Williams, Hamilton, Ohio, writes: "Our whole family depend on Pine-Tar-Honey." Maybe someone in your family has a severe cold perhaps it is the baby. The original Dr. Bell's Pine-Tar-Honey is an ever ready household remedy—it gives immediate relief. Pine-Tar-Honey penetrates the linings of the Throat and Lungs, destroys the Germs, and allows Nature to act. At your Druggist, 25c.