

# The Albemarle Observer.

Only Newspaper Published in Chowan County.

"LOOK FORWARD, AND NOT BACK."

Vol. 5, No 51

EDENTON, NORTH CAROLINA, FRIDAY, DEC. 18, 1914

Subscription: \$1.00 a Year

## Our Fishing Industry; And What it Means.



Mr. Editor:

The magnitude and importance of the fishing industry along the Chowan river is so little understood or appreciated that a brief history of its operations will, we trust, awaken sufficient interest arousing the people of this section to demand the passage of a state-wide fish commission bill for its protection.

The Chowan river at one time furnished the people a larger supply of herrings than any river in North Carolina. Before the advent of dutch or pound nets in the waters of the lower sounds, there was caught by the seine fisheries annually from ten to fifteen million herrings. There were several springs when this catch was exceeded, notably in 1878 and 1882. In 1878 a haul was landed at Colerain that counted out over a half a million and in 1882 one of two hundred and sixteen thousand. There are a crowd of witnesses who will testify to these statements. From 1878 to 1883 the catch averaged fifteen millions per season. About this time pound and gill nets began to increase in Croatan and Pamlico sounds to such an extent not only in taking shad and herrings before arriving at their natural spawning grounds but obstructing their passage that the seine fishing gradually declined until it ceased to be profitable. Those who owned these flourishing industries were virtually driven out of business with the exception of Capehart's fishery at the mouth of the river. Monetary loss to the fishermen can hardly be estimated besides the sacrificing of all their fishing material and apparatus. Never before in the history of the State has such a great industry so far reaching in its benefits to the people, been nearly destroyed by a monopoly. Many of the seine fishermen unable to operate their fisheries embarked into the dutch net business. For a number of years this was quite a lucrative business, the catch of herrings being from eight to ten million, but the number of shad taken gradually diminished, until today it does not pay to fish them except by persons who own them and do their own work. For this reason there are but few nets fished on the Bertie side of Chowan river. In a few years at the rate of decrease there will be none of consequence. How did these fisheries along the Chowan benefit the people of Bertie, Hertford, Northampton, Gates, Chowan and Perquimans counties? Here are a few facts that cannot be controverted. What do ten million herrings mean in cheap food supply to the people of these counties? Simply this: The writer knows from actual experience as a fisherman, that when herrings were plentiful they usually sold from two to three dollars per thousand fresh. That farmers and others would purchase from fifteen hundred to twenty five hundred for their year's supply. The average would be about two thousand. Thus it is seen ten million her-

rings furnish cheap food for five thousand families or between five thousand people from the Chowan river alone. The writer and his brother Edward who operated the fishery at Colerain in 1882, sold two million of herrings at from two to three dollars per thousand to the people of Bertie, Hertford and Northampton counties.

For many years the fishermen appealed to the Legislature to enact a law to restrict the fishing operation of those who blocked the inlets and give a free passage to the ingress of fish but no adequate protection has yet been given. Gov. Glenn appointed a committee to go over the fishing territory view the situation, hear the views of the fishermen and thoroughly investigate the business, that a fair and just bill to regulate the industry could be enacted. This committee performed this duty. They heard the complaints of the fishermen at Edenton, Roanoke Island and other places and after fair and free discussion made their report and formulated a measure that would have given the necessary protection to the industry and save it from deterioration. The bill passed the house of Representatives but was killed in the Senate to gratify the wishes of the Senators from Dare and Hyde counties. Thus by senatorial courtesy a great industry was crippled, an industry of the Albemarle Sound and its twelve rivers along which five thousand people were employed, thousands of dollars of valuable property destroyed, and over 200,000 people deprived of a cheap food supply they have enjoyed since the settlement of the state. When we think of this burning outrage to the fishermen, and people there is but one conclusion forced upon us, viz, that the Senators who voted against it were either ignorant of the situation or indifferent to the cry of the people against the absolute injustice and injury. Our fishermen seeing no hope of relief in the shape of a just measure of restriction by the Legislature met in Washington, N. C., on Dec., 1912, and after a whole days discussion formulated a state wide fish commission bill. Nearly every county in the fishing section was represented. This measure would empower the Governor to appoint a fish commissioner and several assistants from different sections of the fishing territory who are to constitute the board of commissioners. They are to be men of intelligence with a knowledge of the needs of the fishermen and how to regulate its operations with a spirit of fairness and justice. This would take the business out of the hands of the Legislature, who have shown by their action that they have little conception of its importance or how it ought to be protected. This bill failed to pass in 1913, but our efficient fish commissioner J. H. Leroy is making a strenuous fight to get it through the next Legislature. In my judgment it will be if passed instrumental in increasing

the number of fish in our waters. All scientific writers on the subject say, abstracting the fish by net trays and otherwise where they enter from the ocean enroute to these habitual spawning grounds not only curtail the remainder but will eventually almost destroy them. But for the artificial propagation of shad, this would have been the case in our waters. I appeal to our fishermen and the people to urge upon our Representatives to fight for this measure that means so much to them especially now when meats are so high and hogs are dying with cholera.

J. H. ETHERIDGE

## Help The Starving Belgians.

### A Christmas Appeal.

To the Editor,  
Dear Sir,

Christmas approaches and to quote the President's Thanksgiving Proclamation "it has been vouchsafed to us to remain at peace with honor." The duty and the privilege remain of averting starvation amongst the Belgian refugees this winter and for this special purpose the Dollar Christmas Fund has been organized.

It is estimated to date that all the help subscribed in America—and it has been very liberal—including the aid of the wealthy Rockefeller Foundation—does not average more than a few cents for each destitute Belgian—enough to buy food for a few days!

The Dollar Christmas Fund has one great ambition—to see that every man, woman and child this Christmas shall have food, clothing, shelter. This great achievement is happily still possible and to this end we are working with the Christmas Fund of London which has collected for the same purpose nearly \$400,000. The cooperation of the two organizations has many decided advantages. It provides a safeguard against waste from overlapping. It enables our Fund to enjoy the guidance of members of the Belgian Government as regards the distribution of relief. All our workers are voluntary and every cent subscribed, after deducting the cost of stamps and stationery, goes direct to the Belgians.

Even if you have given to every other fund we beg you in the name of humanity to assist the Christmas Fund for which I appeal as Treasurer. Help to send a Christmas gift worthy of America—a tribute of sympathy from one people to another whose needs and sorrows are immeasurable.

If you realize that millions are literally faced with starvation, that children are still crying for food, shelterless women dragging their weary way to help, that aged men are homeless and shivering—and this despite all that is being done—you will give before Christmas and give liberally.

England has received 300,000 of the refugees but there are unnumbered thousands still wandering in France and Holland besides those in stricken Belgium.

A fresh inspiration to our

own peaceful Christmas in America will be lent if we relieve now the sufferings of innocent little children unoffending women and aged men and you may rest assured that no man's Christmas Day will be the less happy because in some cases the gift may entail some measure of personal sacrifice.

Let us remember at this crisis that "to pity distress is but human, to BELIEVE it is God-like."

All contributions entrusted to me as Treasurer will be promptly and thankfully acknowledged. Send along your dollar—more if you can.

Yours very truly,

HENRY CLEWS,  
Treasurer, Dollar Christmas Fund for Homeless Belgians, Broad Street, New York.

## If You Were Archie

### To Every Boy

Archie was an average American boy. He went to school, enjoyed tops, kites, marbles, balls and other things that other boys like. In vacation days he worked when he could find "a job" to help his widowed mother. When he was in the second year of the high school he got sick. Several physicians having failed to find out just what was the matter with him, an interested friend one day took him to see a celebrated physician. This physician made the startling discovery that Archie had leprosy, the most loathsome, the most malignant, the most hopeless of all diseases.

The laws in the State in which he lived were very rigid regarding leprosy and so, without a goodbye to his friends, Archie was rushed off to a lonely place called "Leprosarium," provided by the State for such cases. Here he will have to live the rest of his life, shut out from family and friends and the big throbbing world in which he is so much interested. It was doubtless very lonely indeed for Archie especially at first, and he watched the big ships sail by and longed to have somebody to talk to.

A few months after Archie was sent to this desolate place a friend from "The Mission to Lepers" went to see him. After they had talked a while the little fellow said, "The hardest of all is not to be able to write to the boys back home. I guess their mothers wouldn't want them to be getting letters from lepers. But I wish I could tell them about my wireless station."

Imagine the surprise of the visitor when he discovered that Archie, during his solitary confinement, had constructed a first rate wireless telegraph station. Of course when the visitor went home he saw to it that Archie had what was needed to make the station more complete, and so well did his station work that he was one of the first wireless operators in the world to pick up news of the great Titanic disaster. The wireless operators on the passing ships have become greatly interested in Archie and always signal to him as they pass.

The other day the friend went to see Archie again. He found him eagerly watching for the base ball score, war news or any other

news from the outside world that he could catch through his little instrument. When the visitors asked if there was anything he needed, Archie said, "No, I have everything I need." And he hesitated and stammered a little, and then added, "Would it be too much trouble for you to send me an occasional copy of one of the big magazines?" It seems a pity that the new law about amateurs makes his wireless station ineffective just at present.

Now if every boy in America who hears this story will send Archie a post card with a cheering message, Christmas would be happy indeed for this bright but lonely boy in his solitary prison.

If you were Archie wouldn't you just love to have bright beautiful pictures and cheery little messages from other boys out in the great big world? Send a post card and join in the "Christmas Post-Card Shows" for Archie.

His address is  
ARCHIE THOMAS,  
Penikese Hospital, Penikese Island  
New Bedford, Mass.

## Oyster Supper at Bethel School House.

An Oyster Supper and Auction sale will be given at Bethel school house on Friday night, January 1st 1915. The proceeds will be used for the benefit of the school. A special invitation is extended to all.

## Alfalfa—Warning

There is one objection to alfalfa: It was discovered by an Oklahoma farmer who uncovered his aching heart the other day in print, and told his tale of woe. He said: "We hear a good deal about the value of an alfalfa crop. Some people never let up blowing about it. They tell you if you feed it to your work team you won't have to feed grain to keep them fat; that it is worth pound for pound as much as bran for feeding milk cows; that it is one of the best pork-producers; that it is fine for feeding beef cattle. Give us a rest! It makes us tired! In May, just at the time you ought to be hoeing out your cotton, you have to go into your alfalfa field and cut the first crop. Then in June, just when you have a chance to go fishing, there's another crop of alfalfa to cut, and you don't go. It's blazing hot in July, and you feel as if you ought to keep in the shade some, but you have to get in another crop of alfalfa. In August you want to go to camp-meeting, swap yarns, have a good easy time, and get religion. But you can't—there's that alfalfa again. In September it has always been your custom to visit wife's kin-folks, but do you do it? Not much. Confound that alfalfa! In October you are done with most of the other crops and you want to go to that gambling contraption known as the county fair, and spend some of your money, but you have to harvest another crop of that infernal alfalfa. And in November in desperation you turn the cattle in on the field, and they graze on it all fall. Are you through then? No! You've got to spend all winter feeding."—From Better Farming.

## WINNING HONORS

### State's Health Exhibit Wins First Honors in Florida

Jacksonville, Fla., Dec. 7, 1914.—North Carolina to the front again. This time its in public health matters at the Southern Health Exhibition held in this city in connection with the meeting of the American Public Health Association. The health exhibit made by North Carolina was well ahead of that of any other Southern State. This was the verdict of every visitor to the exhibition and there were about 14,000 of them. Many of the prominent health officials from Canada and our Northern and Western states expressed surprise that the South, and especially North Carolina, should be forging to the front in health work so rapidly. In fact many expressed the feeling that North Carolina's exhibit not only exceeded any other exhibit at the Exposition but it also exceeded any other single exhibit at the International Congress on School Hygiene held at Buffalo a year ago and had but few peers at International Congress on Hygiene and Demography held at Washington two years ago.

North Carolina's exhibit is divided into four parts, one on patent medicines, one on tuberculosis, one on child hygiene and one illustrating the progress of health work in the state.

The Southern Health Exhibition closes this week and North Carolina's exhibit will be returned to Raleigh. Hereafter it will be loaned by the State Board of Health to any convention, club, fair or other organization that wishes to use it, free of charge, provided packing and transportation charges are paid.

## Acorn.

Mr. Charlie Russell and children of Edenton spent Sunday with his sister, Mrs. L. A. Rountree.

Little Fletcher Russell of Edenton, who has been visiting his cousins, Hertell and Hazelett Rountree, has returned home. Master Fletcher is a cute child. His winsome ways have made him many friends during his sojourn here.

Mrs. J. A. Edelblute and children of Manhattan, Kansas, are visiting at Mrs. L. A. Rountree's. Mrs. Henry Brothers and daughter, Miss Pearl, of Whaleyville, Va., are visiting at the home of her daughter, Mrs. Cam Harrell.

Mr. Moody Stallings a promising young attorney of Suffolk, Va., and Miss Sadie Alphin, one of the most attractive young ladies of this section, were quietly married at Gatesville last Thursday.

Miss Sarah Russell spent a few days the past week at the home of her uncle, Mr. W. B. S. Riddick.

Messrs. C. H. McCarthy, W. O. Harrell and John Parker called at the home of Mr. J. J. McCarthy Sunday morning.

Messrs. John Parker and Bobbie McCarthy were out serenading last Saturday night.

Mr. John Barnes made his usual call Saturday night.

Mr. Henry Barnes of Sanbury, spent Wednesday night with his cousin, Mr. John Barnes.