

# Marine Commission

(Continued from Page 4, Section 4)

commission quickly realized that this was a function that could better be handled by the industry itself, and therefore stepped aside in order that the NFI might have a clear field in this important matter.

That the institute has done an outstanding job in this respect is known throughout the industry, but we of the commission take some pride in having been among the first to recognize the importance of this subject and to give it its initial impetus.

### State Participation in Negotiation of Treaties

In 1945 and 1946 the commission presented to the officials of the State Department a proposal that in future treaties dealing with the Northwest Atlantic, it would be most desirable to establish some regular channel of consultation with the states and with the Marine Fisheries Commission and to provide for participation of the states in the personnel of the delegations appointed to negotiate such treaties.

It is interesting to note that as a result of this move the State Department did invite the participation of the Marine Fisheries Commission and the states in the discussions leading up to creation of the Northwest Atlantic Treaty, and that three representatives of the commission served on the United States delegation and one representative of the commission has since served as a United States Commissioner on the International Commission and a number have served on the advisory committee to such commission.

The precedent thus set has been followed in the negotiation of subsequent fishery treaties and the State Department has since then made it a practice to consult with the interstate fishery agencies on the Atlantic, Gulf and Pacific coast.

### Intercoastal Conference, 1946

One of the significant actions of the commission was the calling of an intercoastal conference in Washington on May 16 and 17, 1946. It was the first occasion on which the marine fisheries states of the three coasts met together to discuss common problems. As a result, impetus was given to the movement by the states of the Pacific and Gulf coasts to organize by compact, coastal commissions similar to ours on the Atlantic coast.

The conference was significant also because it undertook to establish organized channels of communication between the various groups of coastal states through the intercoastal committee. Several important resolutions were adopted. One of these declared that effective utilization of international treaties is dependent upon the development of federal-state cooperation.

Accordingly it recommended that with respect to the negotiation and administration of such international treaties relating to fisheries contiguous to the coasts of the United States, consultation with the state governments concerned should be effected during the negotiating stage; the role of the state government should be recognized in the treaty or the enabling legislation and that there should be representation of the state government in American membership or any international commission established for regulatory or administrative purposes.

These principals were subsequently followed by the State Department and have become standard practice.

The second resolution declared it the responsibility and the duty of the several coastal states to declare their jurisdiction over fisheries contiguous to their coasts, also beyond territorial waters and collaborate with each other in the development of suitable policies and programs for the conservation, protection and wise utilization of such offshore fisheries.

A further resolution declared against discrimination by any state in such offshore waters against the fishermen of other states and urged the states to seek through interstate cooperation an agreement on common conservation measures. For want of understanding the constitutional problems involved, the several states have as yet not acted along the lines suggested.

### Haddock Mesh Size

Throughout the reports of the commission from 1947 onward, there appear frequent references to the need for increasing the minimum size of mesh in the haddock nets on the Georges Bank fishery. It is gratifying to report that the International Commission on the Northwest Atlantic fisheries took up this suggestion, so frequently made by the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service and reported in the Commission's Annual Reports, and in 1954 established such minimum size mesh regulations on an experimental basis. The experiment proved so profitable that fishermen from other countries, in other sub-areas under the jurisdiction of the International Commission are voluntarily adopting the larger mesh nets which permit the escape of all unmarketable fish, but hold larger fish and result in greater poundage.

### Atlantic Salmon Restoration

From the beginning of its work in 1954 our commission has been active in promoting the restoration of the Atlantic salmon. It sponsored through Representative Frank Baker, its legislative commissioner in Maine, the creation of a salmon study commission which resulted in the appointment of a permanent Sea Run Salmon Commission with power to manage the Atlantic salmon fisheries in Maine.

The redevelopment of this fishery is necessarily a slow process as the life cycle of the salmon extends over a period of 10 years and the effects of particular conservation measures upon a stock can not be measured until the return of the young salmon to the parent stream some nine or 10 years later. This fact is illustrative of some of the difficulties involved in marine fisheries research.

### Coastwise Study of Striped Bass

The Atlantic States Cooperative Striped Bass Program sponsored by the commission in 1952 is gathering momentum. Massachusetts, New York, Maryland, South Carolina and Florida are operating projects with the help of federal aid funds. Connecticut has just secured a scientist for its approved project.

Rhode Island, New Jersey, Delaware, Virginia and North Carolina are cooperating, using state funds only, but several of them are hopeful of securing federal aid for specific striped bass projects. Identification of stocks and the extent of migratory pattern have been clarified by racial studies conducted by the federal coordinator of the project.

Survival and development of a practically landlocked stock of striped bass in the Santee River Drainage System of South Carolina has aroused much interest and speculation as to the possibilities of other areas.

Numerous mimeographed progress reports, publications in scientific journals, and scientific appendices in Minutes of the Striped Bass Committee reveal the very significant gains in knowledge with respect to this important and controversial fish. This program has already demonstrated its value and gives promise of significant results for future management policies.

### Coastwise Study of Shad

In 1949 the Congress at the request of the commission authorized and made initial appropriations for a five-year study by the Fish and Wildlife Service of shad on the Atlantic coast. This study began in 1950 with the Hudson and Connecticut Rivers and worked southward. It is now operating primarily in the far south, but is following closely the annual production in the rivers previously studied.

The shad project, after five years of study, has produced numerous excellent reports which have been distributed to commissioners and laboratories along the coast. With the cooperation of the Holyoke Power Co. and the Fish and Wildlife Service, between May 23 and June 8 of this year over 3,000 mature shad were successfully lifted over the Holyoke Dam in the Connecticut River, thus after 107 years of absence, shad again swam upstream to their ancestral spawning grounds between Holyoke and Turners Falls on the Connecticut River. This new fish passage device is the only one on the Atlantic Coast which has been successful in passing large numbers of shad upstream, so it may have great significance for other areas.

### Coastwise Study of Clams

A similar study of hard and soft clams financed by the Congress at the request of the commission has been conducted by the Fish and Wildlife Service for five years and has likewise produced significant

reports. Predators and mass mortalities have been the principal problems and they are not yet solved although much valuable knowledge for future management has been obtained.

### Disposal of Industrial Wastes at Sea

Beginning in 1945 much furor was caused by the proposal to dispose at sea of many thousand tons of dilute sulphuric acid, a by-product of the National Lead Company's industrial activities in the state of New Jersey. Sportsmen and sports writers and commercial fishermen were up in arms.

A committee of scientists appointed by the commission to investigate the situation led the commission to conclude that no serious damage to the fisheries would ensue from the deposit of such wastes and the commission refused to be stampeded into taking precipitant action. For this it was roundly reviled in the press, but the soundness of its judgment was vindicated in subsequent reports by scientists from the Fish and Wildlife Service, and from the Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution, whose findings were reviewed and approved by the National Research Council.

Recent reports published in the "New York Conservationist" have even ventured the suggestion that the deposit of this acid waste may have been instrumental in increasing the growth of certain marine organisms which in turn are valuable parts of the food chain of the sea in this area.

### Study of Pollution Affecting the Marine Fisheries

In 1949 at the suggestion of the U. S. Public Health Service the commission accepted a grant, under Public Law 845, to make a coast-wide survey to discover the effects of pollution in its relation to marine fisheries. The commission undertook the responsibility of administering the grant, provided the work thereunder could be done under the immediate jurisdiction of the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

Under this arrangement the project continued for several years. It produced a report for each of the 15 coastal states and a supplementary report entitled, "An Economic Evaluation of Marine Fisheries Affected by Industrial Wastes" which was limited to the states of Maine, New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Rhode Island and Connecticut. It was found very difficult to obtain precise data on the effect of industrial wastes on marine fisheries.

Many administrators believe such industrial wastes harmful, but in only a few instances was it possible to relate the damage directly to an industrial cause. The overall effect of pollution from combined sources was summarized in the several state reports. A few specific fish kills or serious injury to fisheries were reported, but the general effect of all pollution was to increase the B. coli content of certain waters to a point which justified closing them to shellfish production for human consumption.

The project, however, was worthwhile. It provided the state fishery commissioners and the health commissioners with an abundance of data in compact form, on the basis of which plans for the abatement of pollution could be developed and this has been the usual course. Substantial progress has been made in most of the states and the Interstate Pollution Control Agencies for New England, and for the Hudson, Delaware and Potomac Rivers have contributed significantly to these improved conditions.

### Freezing Fish at Sea

Two special study projects initiated by Massachusetts and endorsed by the commission have resulted in studies on the practicability of freezing fish "in the round" at sea and exploratory fishing for tuna in the North Atlantic area.

### Offshore Research in South Atlantic Waters

A third significant study project sponsored by the South Atlantic section was the offshore research program to which reference was made earlier. Vast amount of practical information and biological knowledge resulting from these projects and from the clam studies, the shad studies and the striped bass studies, all of which were sponsored by the commission and conducted by the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service directly or in cooperation with the several states, have produced a tremendous amount of new material which is now being digested and analyzed by the scientists of the federal and state governments.

At this time it is impossible to appraise the value of such work, and I believe it can fairly be said that had it not been for the leadership and sponsorship of the commission much of this work would not have been undertaken, or at least not as early as it was.

### Conclusions

The value of an organization, whether it be governmental or private, should not be measured by the amount of money it has succeeded in persuading governments to spend, and the commission takes no pride in the fact that it has helped to secure appropriations for such purpose.

It does take pride in the fact, however, that it has furnished leadership in bringing about a recognition of the need for more scientific research, that it has encouraged scientists to undertake such work, that it has assisted in making such work possible and that it has consistently advocated that all conservation regulations be based on proven scientific data rather than on the unsubstantiated beliefs of special interest groups.

The commission has served as a clearing house for information, gathering from each of its member states the latest fishery laws and distributing them to the administrators of other states. It also transmits copies of important documents to all commissioners, fishery administrators and state laboratories up and down the coast. It presents at its annual meetings questions of large public policy and after full discussion takes whatever position the situation may require.

In the published minutes of its annual meetings there are included the appendices consisting of biological and technological reports which have important value. The publication of these minutes and the reports is believed to be a very substantial contribution to the increase of knowledge about the fisheries of the coast.

Important reports have resulted from the five-year studies of hard and soft shell clams, shad, and other species, from exploratory fishing for tuna in the North Atlantic, offshore research off the South Atlantic coast, for new techniques in freezing fish at sea, carrying shrimp, refrigerated sea water — all these things tend to increase our knowledge and thus our ability to assist Nature in the production of its annual crop.

The commission takes no credit for the accomplishment of these forward steps, but it does venture to suggest that it has been an important contributing factor in the progress that has been made by the states, by the federal government, and by the various laboratories.

Without the forum which the commission provides, without the stimulating discussions which have led men to embark on new projects, and without the continued emphasis on the importance of research as a basis for conservation measures, it is not at all improbable that many of these constructive forward steps referred to in this report might have been deferred till a later date.

In this respect the commission functions like a catalytic agent in chemistry. If you remember your chemistry you will recall that the catalytic agent is not affected by the chemical changes that take place in its presence. Its significance is that the chemical changes do take place only when the catalytic agent is present.

Perhaps the most significant work of the commission has been its constant effort to preserve unimpaired the traditional jurisdiction of the states over their fisheries, vessels and fishermen. The doctrines established by the U. S. Supreme Court in various fishery cases and in the tidelands cases have been reviewed at length in the Commission's Annual Reports and in communications to committees of the Congress whenever legislation was presented in the Congress imperiling state fisheries jurisdiction.

The commission has likewise presented its views in memoranda to the State Department wherever proposed provisions in treaties or enabling legislation threatened the jurisdiction of the states. It is gratifying to report that in spite of the strong general trend toward centralization of authority in the federal government, the fisheries jurisdiction of the states has been preserved and in some degree strengthened over the past 14 years, due in no small part we believe to the watchfulness and leadership of the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission.

## Gaston Smith's Hobby Became Profitable Job

When a man's hobby becomes his livelihood, you can bet that he really enjoys his work. That's what happened to Gaston Smith, Atlantic net-maker who was a fisherman until five or six years ago.

Smith was captain of the 40-foot trawler Olena and had been a fisherman since getting out of high school in 1929. He always enjoyed mending nets and rigging them and after a time he found that his hobby was more profitable than his business. So he tied up the Olena and opened a net shop on highway 70 just west of Atlantic.

Today, he reports happily, he has more business than he is able to handle. As he talks to a visitor, his deft fingers fly, carrying the net needle in and out of the mesh of a huge, seemingly shapeless pile of net which he is making into a funnel-shaped shrimp trawl, perhaps 85 feet long. Such a trawl requires about a day and a half to sew.

### Father Helps

His only assistant in the business is his father, John D. Smith, who is a retired fisherman. Since all the work in the shop is done by hand, help is difficult to find.

The shop stays busy year round, making mostly fish and shrimp nets, but filling occasional special orders. Smith also supplies rope, cork, and leads. The net he uses comes in bales and is tailored into the desired form.

Though Smith's business comes mostly from Carteret County, he has orders from as far away as Key West, Fla., and Arlington, Va.

### Try Nets Made

Another product of the shop are the try nets, 6-foot trawls which shrimpers use to sample the number of shrimp in the water. Another sideline is the small sport trawls, about the size of the try nets, which amateur shrimpers use.

Fisheries Commissioner Gehrman Holland terms these rigs "deep freeze shrimp trawls."

Mr. Smith is married to the former Matilda Davis of Davis. They have two children: Freddy, who at 20 is fishing the Olena; and Michael, a 16-year-old student at Atlantic High School.

Gaston Smith is a happy man, doing work he enjoys. A couple of years ago, vacationing in Tampa, Fla., he visited a net shop and, finding that they were rushed, he went to work for the remainder of his holiday.

### Deft Fingers Fly



Gaston Smith at work in his shop at Atlantic, N. C.

## Some Fish Swim 'Upside Down'

Most people think of a fish as swimming horizontally with his belly down and his back up, just as they are seen in an aquarium.

Some fishes, however, have adapted different positions for swimming. For instance, shrimp and sea horses swim upright, head up and tail down. The flounder and flat fishes actually swim on their sides while the Nile catfish swims upside down with his back to the bottom and his belly upward, much as a dead fish floats. To all appearances he is a dead fish, as he floats along in a leisurely fashion on the surface of the water.

The salmon normally swims as any conventional fish swims, but he varies his methods by making leaps, traveling as much as three feet through the air.

In this way the fish is able to travel far upstream, beyond the rapids, on his way to the spawning grounds. The name salmon is derived from this habit of leaping. Latin Salmo has the same root as the Latin word Salire, meaning to leap.

When it comes to leaping fish, the tarpon is in front rank, for it is able to propel itself into the air for as much as 7 to 8 feet.

The devil fish or manta which to some appears to be a huge skate or sting ray, 20 feet long and weighing a thousand pounds, can sail through the air for several feet, returning with an impact which can actually be heard several miles.

of the business say that in the early days when the plant's capacity was only 10 tons per day, it was impossible at times to make enough ice to keep pace with the demand.

Today, completely equipped with electric machinery installed in 1941, the plant has a capacity of 20 tons.

The plant was operated at first by steam and all water used in the process was distilled. The present plant softens water from a deep artesian well, then filters it through sand and gravel before freezing it.

The secretary-treasurer of the firm is Mrs. Annie L. Gaskill, who has been with the firm since 1931. Beaufort Ice Co., organized to fill a vital need in eastern Carteret County's economy almost a half century ago, is still filling that need.

Lake Mattamuskeet, the great wild life refuge in Hyde County, was known as Paquette by the Indians.

## Beaufort Ice Co. Came Into Being 45 Years Ago

Forty-five years ago, in the days before a road "down east" made possible rapid transportation from Atlantic and other eastern points in Carteret County, there was no ice plant east of Morehead City and, of course, the Beaufort-Morehead bridge wasn't even a gleam in the engineer's eye.

At that time the food fishing industry of Carteret was centered in Morehead City and Beaufort, instead of being scattered, as it is now, throughout the county. So to meet the problem of providing refrigeration for the highly-perishable product which was the backbone of Beaufort's economy, a group of four Beaufort men chartered the Beaufort Ice Co., now known as the Beaufort Ice and Coal Co. This was in 1910.

### Four Form Company

The original charter, on file in the company office on Broad Street near the courthouse, shows that the corporation was formed by M. C.

Holland, a fish dealer; J. H. Potter, also a fish dealer; Dr. C. L. Duncan, and U. E. Swann, one-time cashier of a Beaufort bank, who still resides in Beaufort on Pollock Street.

Mr. Holland was the father of Gehrman Holland, state fisheries commissioner. J. H. Potter had three sons, W. V. (Will) Potter, J. H. Potter Jr., and E. H. Potter, who managed the company for 40 years after its formation. W. H. (Piggy) Potter of Beaufort, is a grandson of the founder.

Dated Dec. 10, 1910, the charter specifies that the capital stock of the new company was \$12,000. Clerk of Superior Court T. C. Wade, father of Ralph Wade, Morehead City's bandmaster, signed the document which was issued by Secretary of State J. Bryan Grimes.

### Heads Firm

Today William Way is president and manager of the firm. He recalls having heard original officers



Photo by Roy Eubanks

WE OFFER **Complete SERVICE**

TO THE NORTH CAROLINA FISHING INDUSTRY

- Electric and Acetylene Welding
- Engine Installation and Service
- Propeller Reconditioning
- Outboard Motor Repair
- Structural Steel Work
- Boiler Repair
- Tank Building
- Blacksmithing
- Machinist
- Ship Fitting
- Pipe Fitting

CELEBRATING  
OUR  
36th  
YEAR

**BARBOUR'S MARINE SUPPLY CO.**  
Beaufort • North Carolina