

# BRAVE GLOUCESTER FISHERMEN

## Master Mariners Whose Achievements Are a Part of New England's Glory--Careers of the Men Who Have Caught the Most Fish and Sold Them Profitably.

"Captains Courageous" is the name of a recent set of five Roydland Klating, which purports to depict the life of Gloucester fishermen on the Grand Banks.

There is no denying that the title is happily chosen. Courage and judgment are the two prime qualifications of the Gloucester master mariners, without which success would be impossible.

Volumes might be written of their achievements. Those referred to are in the category of the high liners of 1836, that is those who have caught the most fish and have succeeded in getting good prices for them.

Probably the widest known fisherman in this country ever produced is Capt Solomon Jacobs. He is as well known on the Pacific as on the Atlantic coast.

Capt Jacobs is 18, and was born in England and brought to Newfoundland when an infant. When a lad of 17 went across to England as one of the crew of a ship. At 18 he came to New York in the ship Gen Perry of Thomaston, having shipped in England. He went back in the Western Empire, the biggest ship in the country at the time. Soon he was second mate of the J. S. Win-law, which sailed out of Portland.

The year 1872 saw him in Gloucester, attracted by the glamour of the big money then made in the fishing fleet, and then commenced a career as a fisherman that never has been equaled before or since.

His first trip was as hand in the schooner Nevada, Capt William Lawrence, to Georges. After making two trips with him, he switched off into mackerel fishing with Capt Ben Weston, and got his first lessons in handling a seine and catching mackerel.

The next year he went master of the schooner Sabine to Georges for codfish and soon had an opportunity to demonstrate what stuff there was in him as a fisherman. His chance came in a short time. He filled the old Sabine from keel to bulwarks, until she would hold no more. His success led quickly to his being placed in charge of a first-class vessel and the change was signalled by his landing a fate from Georges of 121,000 pounds of fish in the schooner S. R. Lane, which beat the record from those grounds, and is the record to this day.

Having started out as a record breaker, Capt Jacobs has had to live up to his reputation and has succeeded, as the returns will show. This trip, by the way, was made in the remarkably quick time of 13 days. He followed this up with quick fares of 105,000 pounds and 107,000 pounds, record breakers in themselves. In his short career in the Sabine he stocked \$13,000 and in the Lane \$18,000.

He soon abandoned the codfishery for the mackerel fishing industry and proved just as versatile and successful in catching this game fish. After leaving the Lane he went in the schooner Moses Adams and his average stock each year was \$14,000.

His next vessel, and the first he owned, was the schooner Sarah M. Jacobs, which he commanded in 1878. His stock this year was \$19,000.

Her successor was the schooner Edward E. Webster, and for four summers he pursued the mackerel without a let-up. In this craft, the first summer she was new (these figures are not for the whole year, but for about six months in the mackerel fishery), he stocked \$29,000, the next year, in 1882, \$30,700, the biggest on record before or since, the crew's share being \$1003 each of 18 men. Other record-breaking years followed in succession, the figures being \$30,013.83, \$29,000, \$29,000, \$29,500.

In 1888 Capt Jacobs determined to blaze out new paths in the fishing industry. Accordingly he dispatched his two staunch vessels, the Mollie Adams and Edward E. Webster, for the Pacific coast. The details of this daring adventure would occupy too much space here. On the passage one of the vessels, the Webster, was dismantled in a gale, afterward putting into Montevideo, where it cost \$5000 for repairs. The vessels eventually reached the northern Pacific, where they were put into the halibut and sealing business.

His career in the being sea was one of constant adventure. He was harassed on all hands by the Canadians and the U. S. government while fishing for seals. Although large quantities of halibut were caught, Capt Jacobs met the usual fate of pioneers in a new country. Owing to poor freight accommodations and the high cost of ice for preserving the fish in transit the business was a failure. The upshot of his halibut and sealing ventures in the Pacific was that the captain lost his fortune of \$20,000. Today hundreds of thousands of pounds of Pacific halibut are shipped to all parts of the east as the result of this \$20,000 experiment.

Capt Jacobs then retraced his steps eastward, came to Gloucester and in 1891 began again where he had first commenced, at the foot of the ladder. His old-time luck had not forsaken him and from that date to last year he stocked from \$17,000 to \$18,000 in the mackerel fishery. Last season was a red letter one in his career, his stock in the mackerel fishery being \$21,000, the crew's share being \$705 each. His stock, Geo. S. Miller of Hackett's Cove, N. S., took \$1720 in 13 months as the result of the work in that time.

Any one who follows the fortunes of Capt Jacobs as a member of his crew has a good heck at the end of the season. But he must be a good man, as Capt Jacobs carries the best only, and he never lacks a crew.

The honors for second place in the mackerel fishery are a toss-up between Capt Charles Hartly and Capt John McFarland, both coming in very closely together under the wire.

When scarcely big enough to reach a rail Capt Hartly went fishing, at the age of 9, to the bay St Lawrence, in the good old hooking days of glorious memory. He has kept right along pursuing the elusive mackerel ever since. (He is now 15.) That is with the exception of one year when he was the best sailing master of Com. J. Mulcom Forbes' yacht-fisher- man Fredonia, built at Essex. The Fredonia, by the way, is the craft that was hove down in the terrible gales of last December, her crew being rescued by a boatload of gallant sailors from a British steamer. She sunk off Cape Sable, a short time afterward.

Before attaining his majority he found himself in command of a fine clipper fisherman, and a proud day it was for him when he gave the command to get under way and steered his vessel out of the harbor on his own quarterdeck.

He has been unusually successful. No matter how scarce the wild mackerel have been, he has succeeded in taking more than his share out of the wet, and as a result has achieved a place in the first division, and stands among the very titans of the column. When the old-time hooking methods were discarded he adopted the purse seine, and it is as a seamer that his reputation has been made.

Among the crack clippers he has commanded are the Winnifred J. King, David J. Adams, Horace Albert, Guskie Blaisdell, John D. Long, George A. Epton, Richard K. Fox, Paul and Leslie, I. J. Merritt Jr., Fredonia, Grayling, A. and Marguerite Haskins, the latter being his present vessel, of which he owns the major share.

During the past 16 years he has stocked \$20,000. In 1888, during the months of August, September and October, he stocked \$18,000, which is the largest amount in the mackerel fishery in the same time. He stocked \$19,000 in the Long, \$22,000 net in the Merritt and \$14,000 in the Horace Albert. His stock in the mackerel fishery last season was about \$21,000.

best-known and most successful captains in the fleet, was born in Lamolin, Me., 45 years ago, and has been fishing out of Gloucester 25 years, 19 years as master. Before coming here he sailed in the West Indies and South American trade for three years. For the past 16 years he has been engaged in the mackerel and Newfoundland herring fish-

eries for several years, and last year purchased the entire right in his vessel, and is now in business on his own account. His net stock for the past 11 years has been as follows: \$21,000, \$21,000, \$12,870, \$11,688, \$15,921, \$17,000, \$18,322, \$2,000, \$11,711, \$19,345, \$11,719.

This, with \$10,500 for expenses during the same time, the gross stock value is the 11 years' \$213,270, or a yearly average of \$19,393.

Capt Richard Wadding, who was born in Ireland in 1830, is the best fisherman in the halibut fleet for last season. He has followed the fisheries from this port 15 years, coming here when a young man.

The schooner Atahutpa was built for him and put in commission in July, 1891, and his stock for the remaining six months of the year was \$10,633. The next year, 1895, he stocked \$16,119, and last year, 1896, \$22,895, all in the halibut fishery.

In two years and six months he has landed 1,032,484 pounds of halibut.

Capt Wadding is a member of the United Workmen and the Master Mariners' association.

Capt Lemuel F. Spinney is another of the high line halibut catchers who is in the first flight of the "killers." Capt Spinney was born in Yarmouth, N. S.,

some 31 years ago, but went to Gloucester when quite a young man, having sailed from this port for 16 years, six of these being as master. Four years ago the staunch schooner Gladiator was built for him, he having a part ownership in the craft. His venture has been attended with the best of success. The first year in this craft he stocked \$19,200, the second year \$16,400, the third year \$18,370, and last year \$19,500. Capt Spinney has come rapidly to the fore in his class, the fresh halibut fishery, to which these figures allude, and has achieved a reputation of making short trips, his last consuming but 14 days, the stock being \$200.

Capt Spinney is a man of genial characteristics, and has hosts of friends, both ashore and afloat. He is married and is a member of the United Workmen and the Master Mariners' association.

Capt Charles C. Young is another of the young masters who are in the heavy-weight class in the halibut fleet. Capt Young is a young man, having been born in Copenhagen 32 years ago. He came to America at 18, landing in New York, thence coming to Gloucester, following the fisheries from this port for 11 years, 10 in the capacity as steward. Four years ago Capt Young had an idea that he could find the fish himself as well as any one else, and applied for and received a commission as master.

His success was most pronounced from the first, and capitalists by the score stand ready to build him any kind of a vessel he desires when he says the word. His first year as captain was from May 8, 1893, to Jan 12, 1894, in the schooner Brunhilde, when he stocked \$12,902. In 1891 he made 11 trips, stocking \$18,555, in the schooner Hattie F. Worcester.

In 1895 Capt Young beat the record of trips in one year, making 13 within the twelve-month, and notwithstanding the assumed significance of the number, the year's work was extremely prosperous. The total number of halibut landed was 209,709 pounds, the stock being \$19,710. This was also in the Worcester. Last year, 1896, although making fewer trips, 10 he landed the total of 512,037 pounds of halibut, stocking \$18,085.

Capt Young is now in the schooner Lewis H. Giles, and in her has landed more halibut in the same time than any other vessel for many years, but has not been very fortunate in striking a market, the quotations of halibut being very erratic. Capt Young has achieved the reputation of a hustler, and his present command, the Giles, a 120-ton vessel, is one of the finest of the fleet. He is married and a member of the Business Men's association and the Good Fellows. He is known as a genuine hustler, a title earned by hard work. He has all ways sailed from the firm of William H. Jordan.

Capt Alexander McEachern, for years has been known as one of the big liners among the fleet, particularly so in the Grand bank codfisheries. He has clinched this reputation the past season by beating all records in this fishery. During the season of 1896 he succeeded

In this vessel he has followed the bank codfishery and each year has landed more fish than any man in his branch, so that he is a premier "highliner." In addition to these records he made the quickest Grand bank codfish trip on record in 1885, in the schooner Mascot, when he landed 200,000 pounds of fish in five weeks and two days.

In 1881 he landed 650,000 pounds codfish, and in 1875, 635,000 pounds, the records for those years.

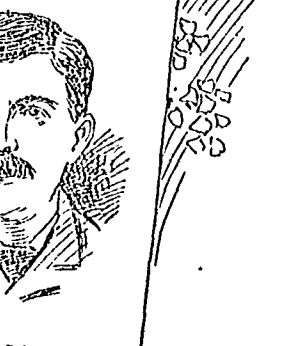
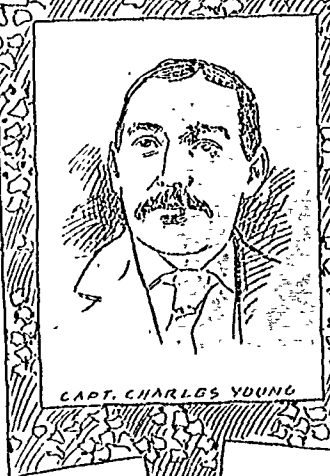
Capt McEachern is a member of the Master Mariners' association, the United Workmen and of Clan Chisholm, Scottish clans.

Capt Andrew J. McKenzie is another of Gloucester's energetic masters, who has been especially identified with the Iceland halibut and the Newfoundland herring fishery. He was born in Prince Edward Island in 1855 and came to Gloucester at the age of 17, in 1872, and has always followed fishing from this port. He was first master of the schooner Belleophon, and of other fine schooners. In 1887, the schooner Senator Saultbury was built for him, and in her he has achieved the highest success. In this year he made the quickest frozen herring trip to Newfoundland on record from and to Gloucester in 17 days. His stock for the year 1888 was \$25,071, in 1889 \$30,413, in 1890 he made his first trip to far-away Iceland, and was high line of the fleet, his stock for the year being \$17,228. In 1891, in the same fishery, it was \$21,041.

In the fall of 1891 the schooner M. E. McKenzie, the largest vessel from the port, 162 tons, was built for him, and Capt McKenzie distinguished himself in this winter, by making the largest stock on record on a Newfoundland, frozen herring trip, the stock being \$10,873. He was also the first master to make two Newfoundland herring trips, which he did in the schooner Coal H. Low.

In 1892 he again went on a halibut voyage to Iceland and made a record which tops any of any captain that ever sailed in the fleet. He stocked on this one voyage \$13,677.23, the most money ever made on a single fishing voyage of any description. This same year after his return from Iceland he made two sealing trips aggregating \$140, also towing in the steamer Carroll and saving many lives, his salvage amounting to \$2000. This gave him a total of \$30,870 stock within the year, eclipsed only by Capt Jacobs.

In 1893 his stock in the halibut fishery was \$20,870. For 1894 his stock was \$17,049. In the fall of 1894, owing to the burning of the lighthouse at Point Platte, N. B., the M. E. McKenzie was run ashore at that place and destroyed, in nine months of 1896 his stock was \$16,873. During the nine years from 1888 to 1897 his total stock is \$170,516.58, or an average for each year of \$18,946.17. For many years Capt McKenzie sailed from the firm of Benjamin Low & Co, but when in 1897 Hugh Parkhurst, who had been with the firm, established a fishing business for himself, he went with Mr Parkhurst's firm, where he now is. His present vessel, the John B. McKenzie, is 121 tons and one of the finest and swiftest boats in the fleet.



les, in both of which he has been extremely fortunate, ranking in the first division. He is the only man who has ever made two Newfoundland herring trips, and marketed them in New York, in one season.

He has always been one of the big liners, although very modest in recounting his many successes. Last year his stock in the mackerel fishery was \$21,304.00, as before indicated one of the largest of the year.

He has sailed in the following schooners: S. R. Lane, William M. Gaffney, William W. Wellington, Nelson Y. McFarland (named after his father), and Emma W. Brown. In 1891 the fine schooner Yosemite was built for him, of which he was the managing owner. She was lost a few weeks ago, while coming from Newfoundland with a cargo of herring.

Capt McFarland is a man of good address and education, and altogether is a fine type of the Gloucester fishing master. His stocks in the mackerel fishery each year have been of the largest, and few there are that surpass him in this respect. He is married, and a resident of Gloucester. He is a member of the Knights of Pythias, United Workmen, Odd Fellows, encampment of Boston, Master Mariners' association of Gloucester, and other fraternal organizations.

Probably the king pin among the halibut fishermen, the most peribous of any of the fisheries, is Capt Thomas Bohlin, and this statement is warranted by the fact that for 11 years he was "high line" of the fleet.

Capt Bohlin is a fine type of the Scandinavian viking, full-haired and well built, and as modest as he is courageous. He is a native of Sweden, and is 41 years old. He went to Gloucester 21 years ago, and immediately embarked in the fisheries. In 20 of these years he has sailed as master from this port. His first command was the schooner Ellsha Crowell, and he has always followed the halibut fishery, which requires the highest skill and bravery.

The largest amount of fish he ever landed on one trip was in the schooner John G. Whittier, in 1893, when 67,000 pounds of nice halibut were weighed off, the stock being \$200. Capt Bohlin is noted for his quick trips and when once his good craft is underway, no grass grows around his keel. It is work, work, and the business of the voyage is transacted as rapidly as possible. He has made trips several times in 14 days from port to port, which, until a few weeks ago, was the record, and has quite frequently made voyages in 16 days and is seldom away more than 22 days, so that the halibut buyers depend upon his appearance with frequent regularity. He averages 11 trips per year and these consume 1200 miles of sea travel even, with the time ashore for fitting and for repairs on his vessel. This also includes the time spent in going into Newfoundland in search of bait, so it will be seen that the captain is a hustler.

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