WATERFRONT WHIFFS

Halibut Prices Drop to Discouraging Levels—Young Fur Seal Appear on the Queen Charlotte Islands—General News of Industry

With a total of only 189,900 pounds being landed, halibut prices at Prince Rupert sank to a discouragingly low level during the week ending yesterday and many of the Canadian boat owners are talking of tying their craft up until market conditions for their product should improve somewhat. However, most of the boats have decided to make one more trip before taking such action.

The week's landings included 103,400 pounds of Canadian fish and 86,500 pounds of American. Total landings for the season up to and including yesterday amounted to 330,450 pounds of which 210,950 pounds had been brought in by Canadian vessels and 119,500 pounds by American.

High price of the week for Canadian fish was 5.5c and 3c and the low, 4c and 2c. The top price of the week for American fish was 7.6c and 3c and the low, 4c and 2c. The fleet can hardly profit at such prices.

Seattle Halibut Prices

During the first week of the present halibut season only a very small amount of halibut was landed at Seattle but fancy prices were paid for it. In all 9200 pounds was brought in to the Puget Sound port and the prices ranged from 18c and 15c to 21c and 16.5c.

A 36-foot fishing boat, built by E. Hansen and J. Hagberg at Massett, was launched there last week. The vessel is to be equipped with a Bolinder diesel engine.

A young fur seal is reported to have been captured by some native hunters on the west coast of Graham Island last week. This is considered very unusual as fur seal do not ordinarily bear their young until early in the summer on the fur seal rookeries among the Aleutian and other far north islands. The young fur seal seems to be quite contented with its new home. As a rule the fur seal do not show up around the Queen Charlotte Islands until May or June. This makes the second young fur seal caught recently on the Queen Charlotte Islands.

The small volume of canning operations and, therefore, light fishing of the 1931 season, while it seriously affected the earnings of the fishermen and helped to accentuate the generally hard times, may have been a mixed blessing after all. As a result of the light fishing and consequent satisfactory escapement to the spawning grounds, heavier runs may result in the cycle years ensuing, departmental experts and fisheries experts confidently anticipate. Possibly, the industry in later years may reap benefits accruing from the trying times through which we have been recently passing. Anyway, it is a happy idea and makes folk feel better.

The Nootka Packing Co. with its plant at Massett the single operator in the field, cut its pack of razor clams in 1931 by 3,187 cases, or 37.4% less than 1930. The output in 1931 was 5,319 cases as compared with 8,606 cases in the year previous.

Casualties in 1931

The first haliut vessel lost during the 1931 season was the Nordlund, run down and sunk in Malaspina Channel March 10 by an unidentified steamer, says the annual statistical number of the Pacific Fisherman in reviewing halibut fleet casualties in 1931. The fish vessel apparently was never seen by the steamer, being struck and rolled under without warning. Capt. S. Nordhus and his crew of two men succeeded in reaching shore with difficulty.

Immediately upon returning to Vancouver after the accident, Capt. Nordhus purchased the 48-foot halibutter Rap I and left for the fishing banks again.

The Prince Rupert halibut boat A. J., formerly the White Lily, owned by Capt. A. Johnson, struck a rock off Klewnugget in an early March fog and sank in deep water with 3,500 pounds of halibut aboard. The men escaped in a dory.

The Monroe, a Juneau halibut boat commanded by Capt. O. P. Brown, was wrecked and became a total loss on a reef off Wingham Island March 21. Her company got off safely and found shelter at a fox ranch. It was not until April 10 that they were able to get word of their safety to Juneau. The vessel had been missing for weeks at that time and grave fears had been felt for the safety of her men.

Fires and Explosions

The 40-foot Seattle halibut boat White Star, took fire and burned to the water's edge off Tatoosh Island, south of Cape Flattery, April 23. Capt. John Haines and his crew of four men were taken off the burning boat by the Rosario, Capt. Ivar Knutsen.

Another boat lost by fire was the Emblem I of Prince Rupert, Capt. Martin Johansen, which burned and sank off Graham Island June 12. Her crew of five took to a dory and were picked up by the tender Chief Seegay of the Canadian Fish & Cold Storage Co.

Explosion destroyed the halibut schooner Northern in Sumner Strait July 8 as she was running to port with a fare of 45,000 pounds of halibut. Capt. Claus Ramberg was severely burned by the blast and the crew had difficulty in launching two dories. The schooner Akutan, Capt. O. S. Bjerke, picked up the dories and succeeded in towing the burning Northern into a cove, where the vessel burned to the water's edge. After landing the rescued men at Ketchikan, the Akutain herself had trouble, going aground at that town and suffering some bottom damage.

Sunset Run Down

The Sunset, Capt. John Hansen, was run down in a fog off Marrowstone Point, Puget Sound, July 19 by the tanker Frank G. Drum. The fishing boat was nearly cut in two, but all of her crew of 10 escaped injury. The badly damaged craft was worked to Port Townsend, where she was beached, later being taken to Seattle for repair.

A severe storm which struck Clarence Strait July 3 drove the Ketchikan boat Little Venus ashore near Union Bay. The vessel was owned by Thor Hendrickson, agent for the Fishing Vessel Owners' Association at Ketchikan, and was commanded by Capt. Carl Benswick. With his two men, he succeeded in making shore, where they spent two days without food or shelter before being picked up by a passing boat.

The Prince Rupert halibut boat W. T. took fire and burned to the water's edge off Stephen's Island during July. Capt. Charles Edwards and his men got off safely and later were picked up by another fishing craft.

Two Seattle halibut boats were lost in the vicinity of Kodiak Island in two successive days, August 11 and 12. On the first day the 56-foot Democrat, Capt. Knute Pedersen, struck a reef and was seriously damaged. A valiant effort was made to beach her but she sank in 90 fathoms near the entrance to Cook Inlet, the men escaping in dories to the San Juan Fishing & Packing Co. cannery at Tutka Bay.

The following day the Marmot took fire at sea off Kodiak Island and was destroyed. Capt. Arne Larsen and his crew of seven men escaped in dories, but one man, Harry Venema, died before they made Kodiak.

Fire destroyed the Seattle boat Volunteer near Alert Bay, B.C., early in September. The boat was running south to Seattle with only Capt. Louis Hanken and Andrew Sather aboard, the other members of the crew having been discharged at Ketchikan. Capt. Sather was already suffering from a burn received earlier from the boat's exhaust pipe. The dory was lost, but the two men succeeded in making a raft of buoy kegs on which they kept afloat until they were picked up. The boat was a total loss.

The halibutter Kalart was wrecked and lost on a fox island in the Gulf of Alaska in October, Capt. Chris F. Aune and his two men barely making shore. They secured shelter at the fox ranch for a fortnight until their signals were picked up by the halibut boat Spray.

The Prince Rupert halibut boat Cape Swain, was totally destroyed by fire which broke out while the vessel was in Tuck's Inlet October 7. Capt. Hugh Miller and his men maed shore safely.

The Vancouber halibut boat Canuck, Capt. Sam Peterson, struck an iceberg while running in a snow storm at night in Cross Sound shortly after the middle of April. She was damaged rather badly about the bow and made water rapidly, but her pumps enabled her to reach Vancouver for repairs.

The Ketchikan halibut boat Eastern Point was disabled by engine trouble near Cape Muzon during July. The vessel, with 10 men on board, was missing for several days and grave fears were felt for her safety until she was discovered at anchor by a coast guard cutter which had gone in search of her.

Having been delayed for eight hours in Dean Channel by snow, C.P.R. steamer Princess Adelaide Capt. S. K. Gray, arrived in port at 10 o'clock last night from the south and sailed at 2:30 this morning on her return to Vancouver and way points.

Driven Ashore During Gale

Ye gods and little fishes took a hand in this one. The fishing smack, loaded with several tons of sardines, was blown ashore at Pidgeon Point, Calif., and left high and dry when tide went out.

PICTURE IS THRILLING

Edmund Lowe is Excellent in "The Spider" at Capital Theatre This Week-end

Except for some effects which it is impossible to duplicate on the screen, the story of "The Spider," week-end offering at the Capitol Theatre here, follows the stage thriller, which was both original and popular, quite closely.

During a theatrical preformance by a magician and hypnotist, a man in the audience is shot. The theatre is surrounded by police who endeavor to find the criminal while holding the audience as witnesses. The magician turns detective and, himself, solves the mystery.

The virile Edward Lowe, as the magician, is excellent. The role of mystery makes him all the more fascinating. The others in the cast are capable.

The suspense is well sustained and the picture very entertaining.

At the meeting of the Chamber of Commerce last night W. L. Coates, C.P.R. general agent, and J. T. Harvey, barrister, were elected members of the Chamber.

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