## The Poor Man's Fresh Meat—the Clam

It also fills the Fisherman's bait box

Written for The Western Home Monthly by Bonnycastle Dale

HAT are all those big fires a foot of the top of the sandflat. These over there?" asked Laddie. are the "soft shell" clams. The big We were seated by the sea "hard shell" ones are found out on the shore. The night had fallen and the prevailing west wind had died down. "Clam bake I guess," men were constantly backing up. Before I told him. Just as you good people of the tide finally covered the flats they had midcontinent have "corn roasts" and a good many thousand clams of the right "fish picnics" so do our new nighbors in size to pour into the bait boxes. These midcontinent have "corn roasts" and a good many thousand clams of the right "fish picnics" so do our new nighbors in Nova Scotia have their "clam bakes." were then tied to anchors in the tideway And it takes a good host and careful cooking so as not to serve up a nice wee portion of sand with each and every clam. If guess their bellies are full, "irreverently quoth the lad, as wisps of merry songs were borne across the inlet. What other many shores, yet when we opened it the fires have burned along this strand? Only the generations ago the then French was their natural course of life. Within westward the natives (Micmacs) built writing of take bait only for their own merry fires of the poor settlers' homes and fishing. The men over at Fundy Bay crops. All these warlike scenes are past dig bait for the fleets of fishing boats and gone. The Union Jack replaces the which go out to the banks. So they dig lilies of France. The Indians have gone on every tide and store their clams alive, to their unknown graves; all but a very others catch and open and salt the bait. few; and this forested, sea begirt, pen-insula island of Nova Scotia is settled men of this "southwest shore" (really it with descendants of Scotch, English and is the east shore of Nova Scotia, but in the Irish, whose young roast clams where the time of Halifax being the headquarters Indians in olden times had more tragic of the fleet all roads were built out from

that swim in the shallow water off the we have only seven-foot tides. Arrived coast. Water to twenty fathoms where at Fundy and his work obtained he set out the modern steam drag-net (the new with his pails and took an outside position fishing boats) will foul every time on the so as to be on good rich clam flats where boulder-covered bottom. From where I the other chaps were not bothering him write this, as far as the eye can see, each with their clam hoes. He threw his clams and every field and all the shores are in piles as the ground was enormously covered with great and small boulders and rich. Once he thought he heard a cry or stones left by the retreating ice of the glacial period. If it spoiled the "hay-fields"—the one I see from this window creaming wave that splashed into his is so bespattered that Laddie could leap from stone to stone across it (yet they take a fair crop of "English hay" from it; started in haste to fill his pails or buckets; but the water was even his feet in no time.

Laddie is going out on the morrow with was, "how high does this tide run?" some fishermen to catch the big brown codfish, if he is lucky enough not to hook blows," he remarked he was lucky that all dogfish. So, as the baitbox is empty, only his legs were wet.

it is up to him and they to fill it. Anxious Although it is seldom that we men who it is up to him and they to fill it. Anxious I pictured the four

ten generations ago the then French was their natural course of life. Within settler watched with alarm the twinkling a few months these flats on which the fires built by boat crews of the attacking clams were dug will again be filled with British fleet, and on another beach to the medium-sized bait. The men I am

roasts.

there; and so this is "southwest" of Halifax all right!) This young man was bait; bait for the millions of big codfish used to digging clams on this shore where that swim in the shallow water off the take a fair crop of "English hay" from it; the other hay grown wild on the tide flats but the water was over his feet in no time, is known as "red top"). So it was the glacier that deposited the rocks in the fishing grounds and made them so that only handline or trawl fishermen could use them.

Started in haste to in his pairs of buckets, but the water was over his feet in no time. Discarding everything he started splashing ahead for all he was worth, but he was soon in softer flats and up to the knees. His mates now came rowing towards him and hauled him in. First thing he asked them.

eyes watch the retreating tide; as it takes follow Natural history work meet strange two clams to every hook—two on a cod adventures (all these are met by the line and three to five thousand on a trawl, writers who never leave their desks—met so it takes some digging, as the codfish in their minds) I did see an odd sight eats only the soft bag and not the hard made by even the humble clam. I snout of the clam. I pictured the four happened to be staying on one of the snout of the clam. I pictured the four happened to be staying on one of the men at the work. They use the N.S. islands of the Gulf of Georgia. It was clam hoe, and a good man can dig a cold weather and sometimes at night we bucket of these shell fish in a few minutes had nipping frosts. I was afoot along where they lie the thickest. They prefer the great sandspit anxiously watching for the medium sized clam as the great big seal which "sun" there. None were to chaps have too much snout. It is be seen. A single blacktail deer, herded wooderful her thickest. wonderful how thickly they will lie within by me towards the narrow end of the spit,



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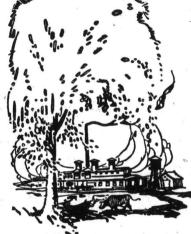


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