

# Mr. Condon Reviews Fish and Bait Problem

## 25 Years' Experience as a Fisherman--He Claims to Know the Needs of Our Staple Industry

### Advocates Bait Depots All Around the Coast

(Editor Mail and Advocate.)

Dear Sir--Would you kindly give me the use of your valuable paper for me to give my views, ideas and experience of over 25 years, living in Newfoundland's most famous bait resort, Cape Broyle. Superior to all others and renowned for its bait fishes, caplin, squid and herring as its record of the past for the number of Bank fishing vessels of Gloucester, Mass.; Lunenburg, N.S.; and our local Banking fleet, and I may say for the greater part of the above period making a livelihood from the above bait fishes, and doing what no other individual was doing in this Newfoundland of our. So therefore it was up to me to study the above bait fishes. I therefore ought to know what the fishermen need in that line to protect them, and there is only one way to do so and that is by establishing bait freezers for squid and herring only, the former if possible, as it is the superior bait fish, more durable and lasting on the hook, handling or trawl, and keep better and longer and more palatable to the codfish.

I have fought political battles all but once as an independent, 1889, 1897, 1900, 1908 (when I caused a tie) 1909 and 1912, and as whether I believed to have been defeated or knifed on all occasions, I may ask for the use of your columns later, and had I been elected on any of these occasions I would have demonstrated my ideas as to bait freezers in various localities for the fishermen on our island home, and I will demonstrate some ideas and others in the very near future in that House of Assembly.

As many of my readers may ask where this fight comes from, and my reply to them would be from the good English stock on one side, Carter, Blackler, and Saunders, and when you fuse that with the good Irish stock from which two of Newfoundland's brightest sons and which this island home never produced their equals in their capacity before, during or since their time. Their works, more renowned, viz the late Michael Kearney, shipbuilder, and the late Daniel Condon, the inventor of the Penton and Cofferdam Fuse. Those bloods, English and Irish, and can it be wondered at this side of the grave, and now within the last few years my idea was to try another way to bait freezers, the long-felt want in reviewing the various governments from 1889 to the present time, about all of which had in their various manifestoes, Cold Storage and Bait Freezer for the fishermen, but where are they today, in the minds of insincere politicians who had not the interest of the producer, the fishermen and the country men at heart, and when the various governments who had expended millions of dollars on railroads, Main and Branch lines, (I am not opposed to railroads,) but, give me first bait freezers, and the railroads after to convey bait in cold storage cars from one section of the country to the other, with cold storage rooms on the various coastal boats to convey bait to the different parts of the country, the French Shore and Labrador inclusive. Only a few years ago I formed an ice and bait company to bring my ideas to the fore, but you cannot make an idea a success with a lack of capital; but, I will make and bring these ideas to the fore and a success in the very near future.

One of my first experiences as to one of our principal bait fishes, Squid was that old hereditary law, which applied to the same that a fisherman could only catch a squid with the figger; but, he could not use a trap on seine. By using trap or seine the fisherman was liable to imprisonment and confiscation of said trap or seine. What were the politicians and merchants doing for not to have that law struck off--nothing--and over 20 years ago myself set out a trap, which I had to call a herring trap, bearing the above penalties; but, I proved the benefits of same, and later called on an ex-minister of Marine and Fisheries to have the said law amended and to allow a fisherman the use of traps and seines to catch squid. But years ago when I approached the present and courteous Minister of Marine and Fisheries, A. W. Piccott Esq., to have the said law amended, and the fishermen and all in this country today

ing in the wet and cold, often with oil clothes that would not keep out wet fog. Often day after day and night after night unsuccessful enough to make them downhearted, and their fathers, mothers, wives, sisters and brothers and families at home anxiously looking out for their return. I say what have the government to answer for, and the business men of Water Street and all over the Island to answer for, for not long ago changing same. By making the fishermen a success by the increased catch it would make merchants, artisans, labourers, government and country all a success. The loss to the country annually by shore fishermen on our coast and Labrador and the West coast, winter fishery, inclusive of the Banking fleet, should not be less annually than from 100,000 to 250,000 qts at say 35 per qt. would be from \$350,000 to \$8,750,000, and I may state that I have the endorsement of most of our leading men in the country, A. W. Piccott Esq., Minister of Marine and Fisheries; Hons. John Harvey, Philip, Templeman, J. Harris, John C. Crosbie, Jas. Angel, J. D. Ryan; Messrs Harvey & Co., A. S. Rendell & Co., A. Goodridge & Sons, Job Bros., C. McKay Esq., J. S. Rendell, Esq. and others in St. John's, also from the outports we have Samuel Harris, Newfoundland's most successful banking master and merchant; Messrs. Patton and Forsey, S. Titto & Sons, John B. Foote of Grand Bank, Capt. Wm. and Tom. Hollett, Capt. Eph. Inkpen and Jas. Vigus; Messrs. C. F. Bishop & Co., Gen. Bartlett, L. Cheeseman, L. Feuvre, member of Burin, Reddy Bros of Marystown, T. Farrell & Sons of St. Lawrence, Capt. John Lewis (Metaphora) of Holyrood, Messrs. Morris of St. Anthony, Capt. Wm. Bartlett, John Parsons, George Barbour, Wm. C. Winsor, Jesse Winsor, Thos. Walsh, J. Murphy, A. Lodge, McCormack & Walsh, J. S. Stone of Catalina, Edward Parsons, M.H.A.; Dunne Bros of Harbor Grace and Dawes of Bay Roberts.

Frozen squid could be brought last season in the schooner John R. Bradley from Princetown to St. Pierre, and to the same a great measure of the success of the French Banking fleet is attributed to. This season one of them ost progressive and enterprising firms that we have in the Island, Messrs Harvey & Co., (Hon. J. Harvey) has established a bait freezer at Rose Blanche, and I have it from good authority, at a cost of about \$7,500 and has made same a success. I would not be surprised if it was not that enterprising firm (Harvey & Co.) that imported the \$8,000 worth of frozen squid. But they must have squid traps attached to freezers to catch squid and herring, as the fishermen as a general rule, will not jig sufficient squid now for a freezer.

I am informed that Samuel Harris and others are about forming a company to operate one or two bait freezers, and the energetic firm of Messrs. A. Goodridge & Sons, has one on a small scale at their branch at Revere. Also our enterprising fish merchant, Walter Balue Grivee, Esq. is a firm believer in frozen squid for the Labrador, also the Hon. W. C. Job and G. C. Fearn Esq.

In the press, you will read of the scarcity of bait year after year and at all seasons in a country where there is an abundance of bait, on times in various localities. I intend the coming season to operate squid traps, in Conception, Trinity and Bonavista Bays under my own supervision after caplin school or the Shore and Bank fishermen for the Labrador &c.

Our esteemed citizen, John Cowan Esq., was on a visit to Cape Broyle last season and he can verify my statement in many ways, by his conversation about squid and bait freezers and from his knowledge of what Capt. Abraham Cook and other Banking masters of Lunenburg stated to him about the same. The past season on the greater of the Lunenburg banking fleet left our shore and went to Casno and vicinity, and secured squid from the traps and freezers there, when there were no squid obtainable on our shores. But it is the old saying over and over again, this petty native jealousy and want of confidence. The old saying and a true one "No man is a prophet in his own country," especially here. Had I hailed from the sunny shores of Norway, Nova Scotia or any other outside place, the Government and others knowing of my experience with bait after over 25 years, I would be taken by the hand and my ideas demonstrated, and they would likely have me on the Cabot Tower giving ocular demonstration of my experience &c., as to caplin, squid and herring and bait freezers.

But Water Street firms, business people and other investors, will invest in a whale, hands beyond the Rockies and in the air--N. S. Steel, Co., D. I. Steel Co., C. F. R. Stocks and Co., even as small as a nut, screw or bolt. Had they only invested a part of the same in bait freezers and not to be sending their money out of the country, many of them would

be the gainer and the more wiser today. They should be gaining a two dividend direct and indirect with the bait freezer, latter indirect, brought about by the increasing catch of fish and prosperity to the fishermen in which all would participate. What I would suggest is that a government should give a guarantee of the cost for agreement sake to be \$250,000 (more or less) would mean in its worst feature a debt of \$15,000 direct--that the government and the country would have to pay the shareholders which would all be in the country, and the indirect gain would be ten fold to the credit of the revenue and the country, by the increased catch of from 180,000 to 250,000 qts of fish annually.

That is one of my reasons for being a member of the Fishermen's P. Union and a staunch Lieutenant of Newfoundland's brightest sons, W. F. Coaker, Esq., President of the F. P. U., and who has and who will do more good for the fisherman and producer of this country, and the country than any other man up to the present time, and I can say that I have his strongest endorsement in my bait freezing ideas and squid traps for the fishermen, and the same is one of his principal planks in his platform and other ideas of mine which will be beneficial to the country in due time.

When I succeed in the above I will make the fishermen successful and independent and make their homes comfortable and prosperous. Fathers, mothers, wives, sons and daughters happy in this Newfoundland of ours, and help to keep them in their native land. Altho small in numbers are we, not the brightest gem in the British Crown, being its oldest colonies and colonized only by English and Irish and a small percentage of Scotch. The hardy sons of the above race that knows no fear on land or sea, and who has proven themselves on the frozen pans to the icefields and the polar regions, and in every country they have made a home; but keep down through a lack of education in the outports. We should have had a compulsory system in the outports the past 25 years.

Hoping that I have not trespassed on your valuable space and that all natives will be more loyal to one another in the future. I remain, Yours truly, M. E. CONDON, Cape Broyle, Nfld., March 17th, '15.

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