

CURRENT PRICE OF GODFISH

Lorenzo Noseworthy vs William A. Munn Supreme Court

JAMES RORKE, Sr., examined by Howley K.C.

I am senior partner in the firm of James Rorke & Sons. Been doing business at Labrador for at least three generations. Personally I have had 52 years experience. Was engaged in the business last year—1914.

When first I went into the business, there never was any question of the price of fish until the planters came home and began to settle up, then the price was settled by the large exporters of fish such as Ridley, Munn, Donnelly, Baine Johnson, Duder, Job. About 35 years ago there was some variation. At that time the merchants received a stipulated price for first cargoes that sailed, and it became the custom to pay the planters six pence a qtl. to induce them to ship their fish early in order to help load the first vessels. This continued only a few years. Since then there has been another change, and planters were promised the highest price when they were shipping their fish that was paid, that is that was paid by the general trade. At the time that delivery is made of the fish at Labrador by the merchant the price is unknown by the merchant, he can only speculate or judge by the condition of the markets. As a rule the price is unknown till the middle to the last of October. Last year the price was settled earlier than usual, and before the usual data was known, and furthermore in addition to the absence of the usual data the extraordinary conditions arising from the war had to be taken into account. I don't know of my own knowledge how the price of fish was fixed last year.

I was in England in September, everything was in a depressed condition and banks were very indifferent about taking drafts on fish cargoes. Mr. Howley asks if there was any discussion with Mr. Bennett about the price of fish. Mr. Mews objects. The answer is no.

Mr. Howley asks—irrespective of the difficulty of handling bank drafts what was the condition of the fish markets? Mr. Mews objects. Answer, Very dull indeed and as an instance Mr. Bennett informed witness that Jobs had sold their Straits fish in Halifax and some of the fish of the previous year had not been disposed of.

The bulk of the Labrador fish is marketed in the Mediterranean or European market and it is upon conditions prevailing over there that prices are fixed. Nothing could be

said at all at that time, 1st. week in Sept., as to price and it looked very black for selling at all. It was also pointed out to me that Ins. rates had doubled. These conditions roughly speaking, continued till the middle of October. About the 1st week in November things began to brighten a bit. Improvements only took place after all the fish had all been delivered to the merchants on Labrador, and about a month after the price had been fixed at \$3.60. I don't know if these conditions were generally known to Nfld. fish-buyers and planters.

I think my sons wrote letters to Labrador about them. 9100 qtls were taken by our firm at the Labrador, 537 were paid for at \$4.00 and the balance at \$3.60, that 537 was at the highest price on the coast receipts to that effect were given. Fish receipts put in marked J. R. Seny. 1.

The reason that this 537 qtls was contracted for at the highest price was that some of our competitors were giving that for fish and we wanted to get our first vessel off as soon as theirs. Some of the parties from whom we got fish at the highest price also gave us fish at the current price and they were paid different prices \$4.00 and \$3.60. In my opinion under the conditions existing about the first half of October, \$3.60 was the maximum price we could give. At that time we were all in fog. I never felt such an uneasy time since I have been in business. Small lots of fish were bought in October and November in St. John's and Conception Bay. We couldn't handle fish at less than 40c qtl. from Labrador so that \$4.00 paid in Nfld. was only equivalent to \$3.60 on Labrador.

The insurance from Labrador was the highest I ever recollect paying. I bought at Carbonear from Cullen about 140 qtls. 19th November for \$4.00. He was a dealer of Winter's. After trying the town he came back to me saying he couldn't do better. We bought 350 qtls on Labrador at \$3.50 and the rise receipts given with that condition, this was done at Sellers request. It was bought before \$3.60 was decided as the price.

They were paid at \$3.60 in my experience we have always paid at the so-called current price by the trade, when the information as to markets is obtained as detailed in my evidence previously. Mr. Howley K.C. asks:—Have you ever lost money in your transactions on fish at the so-called current price. Mr. Mews objects. Answer, If I had all I have lost in the Labrador fishery the last 10 years, I would pack my trunks and say goodbye to the land of fish and fogs. I have lost considerable money on fish transactions at the current price during the last 10 years. I mean that on the whole I've lost on the current price in 10 years. My firm is sued by John and Mark Parsons for or with regard to current price of fish. Had some conversation with them after they came from Labrador about the price of fish. They asked what was the price going to be paid. I said \$3.60 but if the other

merchants such as Winter, Munn, Ryan and others paid more I would give the same, they mentioned Baine, Johnston, I said that I heard they paid \$4.00 until they got their steamer over then they put it down to \$3.60. I made a partial settlement then, they took a considerable sum. They came for their balance on Saturday as I received the Writ on Monday. I paid them at \$3.60. After I received the Writ from Howell who is suing us he came to me and said he was not a party to it, had not given authority for it and was not going to prosecute the action. Geo. W. Howell was the party, the senior member of the firm I had settled with him in full at \$3.60 sometime before that, with which he was perfectly satisfied.

Cross-examined by Mr. Mews, the witness said:

AT THE NICKEL

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Cross-examined by Mr. Mews, the witness said:

(To be continued)

A Narrow Escape

A bank fisherman, James Yetman, of the tanker "Flirtation" of St. Mary's, arrived here by the Shore train today. Speaking to a Mail reporter, he said that while tending their trawls about 10 days ago on the Banks, he and his dory mate had a narrow escape from drowning. The boat capsized with the sea running it being very rough, and both were thrown in the water. After much exertion they climbed on to the bottom of the dory and their vessel effected a rescue. Yetman, in his struggles to get on to the dory, strained himself badly, the boat in the surging hit him repeatedly and he was severely hurt about the chest and other parts of the body. Mr. Eli Whiteway drove the man to Hospital on arrival for treatment. When taken on board their vessel he and his friend were in a bad state.

Train Notes

Thursday's express arrived at Basques at 1.05 this a.m.
The Bru express and local trains combined, arrived here at 12.30 to-day.
George Cleary, Bell Island, against whom a warrant was issued a few days ago, in insolvency proceedings, has skipped out. He got away in the ore carrier Storstad and is now believed to be in Sydney.

With the Rod

Salmon in Harry's River have been coming up well.
Fifty salmon were taken from Harry's River last week.
R. G. VanHorne caught a 27-pounder on Harry's River last week. He secured seven other fish.
Sixteen salmon were landed from Fork's Pool by W. R. Warren and party from June 25 to July 3.
On four miles of South Branch of Codroy, Grand River, about 130 salmon have been secured to date.
W. J. Jones, of Halifax, fishing on Harry's River, secured five fish the past week, weighing from 7 to 23 lbs.
C. P. Gross, of Waterbury, landed eleven fish from Harry's River last week. The biggest weighed 30 lbs.
Twenty-one salmon were taken from Blair's Pool, Grand River, last week, by two rods. The fish scaled from 8 to 20 lbs.
There are quite a number of good salmon pools on Harry's River this year, they having been formed by the ice coming down stream last spring.
There is an abundance of salmon in Serpentine River, and Mr. Grant, who was fishing there, is reported to have landed quite a number of large fish.
During the past fortnight large schools of salmon have been seen entering the Lower Humber. This river is likely to give a good account of itself during the season.
B. Balfow, who is fishing on Harry's River, caught seventy-five pounds of salmon the past week. There were five fish in all; the biggest weighing 26 1/2 lbs. He took two fish in three-quarters of an hour.
Salmon of large size are unusually plentifully in Harry's River, and quite a number have been captured of late. Roadmaster Cobb spent a few hours at North Brook Pool on Saturday and Sunday, capturing several fine fish, three of which weighed thirty lbs.—"Western Star."

Velvet pencils for commercial use.—apl2,tf

SHIPPING

S.S. Argyle left Placentia at 3 a.m. today for Miramichi.
S.S. Clyde arrived at Pogo at 5.30 p.m. yesterday.
S.S. Ethie left Bay de Verde at 6.50 p.m. yesterday and is due at Carbon-ear today.
S.S. Glencoe left Burin at 1.45 p.m. yesterday, bound west.
S.S. Home left Pilly's Island at 4.10 p.m. yesterday, bound north.
S.S. Kyle left Basques at 2 a.m. today.
S.S. Meigle left Humbermouth at 8.40 p.m. yesterday.
The barqtn. Minne, Capt. Wakeham, arrived at Bahia, Wednesday after a run of 48 days, all well.
The S.S. Portia sails West Tuesday morning 10 o'clock.
S.S. Prospero left Coachman's Cove at 11.20 this morning coming South.
U can get Elastic Cement Roofing Paint in 1, 2, 5 and 10 gallon tins from your dealer.—apl14,eod
The Reid Nfld. Co. had the following report from the Sagona to-day via Domino and Pogo:—"Sagona arrived at Indian Tickle at 6 p.m. yesterday. Wind S.S.W., fresh breeze; thick fog; coast all clear of ice. Just a sign of fish from Battle Hr. to here."

Who's chewing Coca-Cola Gum? Everybody's chewing it. Who are selling it? We are—Yours truly, W. Brophy, J. L. Courtenay, Barber, W. Gosse, T. Malone, Duckworth St.; P. Maher, T. McMurdo & Co.; T. H. O'Neill; Royal Stores, Ltd.

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PERCIE JOHNSON, Insurance Agent

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Fresh Arrival of Films. The Best Seen Here.
Complete Change Again To-Day.
Hear the finest song from the London Halls, "Somebody's Boy Has Gone to the Front."
Note: This beautiful song has been and is the rage in England, and will be heard at Rossley's West End Theatre first time this side of the Atlantic.

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A Vitagraph 2 part special feature with Lillian Walker and Kate Price.
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A comedy with Constance Talmadge and Billy Quirk.
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A Western Drama with G. M. Anderson.
"THE SMUGGLERS DAUGHTER"
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A WELL VENTILATED THEATRE.
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