

27.—THE FISHERIES OF GLOUCESTER, MASS., IN MAY, 1887, WITH NOTES ON THOSE OF OTHER LOCALITIES.

By W. A. WILCOX.

Notwithstanding a backward season and the almost continuous cold, foggy weather, the fisheries have been actively prosecuted during the month, and the receipts, while not large, have been in excess of those of May, 1886. The demand has improved, but the receipts have been ample to supply the trade at fairly remunerative prices.

Codfish have been reported scarce on many of the distant fishing grounds, especially on George's Bank; but they have been more than ordinarily abundant on Western Bank and in the shore waters off Cape Ann. The large school of cod found in these waters in April has remained in the vicinity, and the Gloucester shore fleet have found excellent fishing throughout the month in the immediate vicinity of the harbor. On May 5 the schooner Northern Eagle, with a crew of ten men, secured 24,000 pounds of cod on the local grounds, 3 to 5 miles south-east from Eastern Point—the eastern extremity of the harbor.

On May 8 nine vessels landed a total of 176,000 pounds of codfish, as the result of two days' fishing with trawls. The following statement shows the catch of each of the vessels separately and the number of men constituting the crew:

Vessel.	No. of men.	Catch.
Schooner Abbie A. Snow	12	<i>Pounds.</i> 43,000
Schooner Rising Star	10	88,000
Sloop Dixey	10	40,000
Sloop Breeze	4	18,000
Sloop Teddie	3	10,000
Schooner Chromo	4	9,000
Schooner Gracie	4	7,000
Schooner Optimatus	2	6,000
Schooner Julia A.	4	5,000

In addition to the above, each of these vessels landed a few hundred pounds of haddock. The boat-fishermen also had a large catch on the same grounds with hand-lines. The fishing in Ipswich Bay, on the north side of Cape Ann, was also much better than in May of 1886.

The receipts of fresh halibut show a gain over the corresponding month of last year. The schooner Willie M. Stevens arrived on May 13, with 74,000 pounds caught on Grand Bank; this being the largest fare landed during the month. The prices at that time were, owing to the oversupply of halibut, lower than at any previous period during the year, the cargo selling at 2½ cents a pound. The schooner C. B. Manning, while on a halibut trip, went ashore on Gannet Ledge, Nova Scotia. The crew were saved, but the vessel proved a total loss. Of

the Gloucester fleet visiting the coast of Iceland for halibut during the present season, the *Davy Crockett* was the first to arrive there. She reached the fishing grounds on April 8, nineteen days after leaving Gloucester. The second vessel to arrive was the schooner *Annie M. Jordan*, after a passage of twenty-three days. Halibut were reported as abundant, though it was said that the only fishing by the natives was for sharks. Capt. John Cousins, of the schooner *Annie M. Jordan*, writes that on the passage, while in latitude $59^{\circ} 20'$, longitude $30^{\circ} 10'$, he sailed through vast quantities of dead fish, extending a distance of 5 miles. The fish were strange to the crew, differing from any heretofore seen by them. They were from 12 to 16 inches long, some of them resembling rock cod.

The schooner *Paul and Essie*, of Swampscott, arrived home from Pensacola, Fla., where she had been engaged for four months in the red-snapper fishery, having stocked \$4,400. She reported having found new and valuable fishing grounds off the Florida coast.

The southern mackerel fleet received daily additions to its numbers during the month, though fewer vessels have been engaged in the fishery this season than are ordinarily employed. The catch was far from satisfactory, owing largely to unfavorable and foggy weather during a large part of the time. Only a few of the vessels have caught any considerable quantity of fish, many of them having but a few barrels, and others have returned to refit without having caught a single fish. The total catch of mackerel by the southern fleet, from the beginning of the season up to the end of May, aggregated only about 5,000 barrels of salt mackerel, sea-packed, and about 8,000 barrels sold fresh. The mackerel are now well to the northward, and the body of fish seem to have disappeared for the time being. The mackerel vessels are widely scattered. A large part of the fleet is cruising between Fire Island and the Bay of Fundy, going as far to the eastward as George's Bank; quite a number remain in the vicinity of Block Island, and the remainder are cruising off the Nova Scotia shore. Large schools of pollock are reported off Cape Cod, and the fishermen claim that they have kept the mackerel away from the shores.

The catch of small herring in the vicinity of Eastport has been unusually light, and the sardine factories located there are reported to have packed only 2,000 cases up to the end of May, against 50,000 cases to the corresponding date in 1886.

The weir and trap fishing along other portions of the New England coast has fluctuated considerably. At times large catches have been made in certain localities, and again only small quantities have been secured, but enough bait has been taken to supply the fishing fleet at reasonable prices. Salt-clam bait, however, has proved very successful in the Western Bank cod fisheries, and the vessels from this port making the quickest trips and securing the largest fares have used salt clams exclusively. The schooner *John W. Bray*, which sailed from Gloucester

on January 18 to engage in the Newfoundland frozen-herring trade, was detained by being frozen in at one of the harbors. She returned on May 12 with a cargo of 600 barrels pickled herring.

Fish landed at Gloucester by the fishing fleet in May, 1887.

Fishing grounds.	Fares.	Codfish.	Halibut.	Hake.	Cusk.	Pollock.	Had-dock.	Mack-erel.	Herring.
	No.	Lbs.	Lbs.	Lbs.	Lbs.	Lbs.	Lbs.	Bbls.	Bbls.
By Gloucester vessels :									
Sable Island Bank	71	2,446,000	90,400	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
Grand Bank	20	70,000	726,000	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
George's Bank	115	2,129,000	210,700	.....	2,000	.....	.....	.....	.....
Brown's Bank	3	81,000	16,400	.....	1,000	.....	.....	.....	.....
German Bank	1	25,000	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
Cashe's Bank	1	15,000	.....	3,000	2,000	.....	.....	.....	.....
Quereau Bank	3	18,000	66,000	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
Off Sable Island	3	.....	78,000	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
Off Newfoundland	3	.....	111,000	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	600
Off New England shore	121	838,100	.....	.....	.....	.....	32,505	.....	.....
Ipswich Bay	14	121,500	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
Off Cape Ann (small boats) .....	.....	153,900	.....	.....	.....	.....	19,400	.....	.....
Off Cape Ann (traps) .....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	298
Off New England shore	13	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	1,268	.....
Total	368	5,847,500	1,298,500	3,000	5,000	.....	51,905	1,268	898
By vessels belonging at other ports : *									
Jeffrey's Bank	18	383,000	.....	53,000	19,000	.....	37,000	.....	.....
George's Bank	3	41,000	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
Ipswich Bay	8	248,000	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
Sable Island Bank	2	170,000	4,000	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
Off New England shore	25	173,400	.....	12,000	7,000	832,000	9,400	.....	.....
Cashe's Bank	6	192,000	.....	18,000	28,000	.....	8,000	.....	.....
Middle Bank	2	22,000	.....	.....	.....	.....	2,000	.....	.....
Nantucket Shoals	5	63,000	31,500	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
Off New England shore	1	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	110
Truro (weirs)	3	.....	.....	.....	.....	155,000	.....	.....	.....
Total	73	1,292,400	85,500	83,000	54,000	487,000	56,400	110	.....
Total for May, 1887	441	7,139,900	1,334,000	86,000	69,000	487,000	108,305	1,378	898
Total for May, 1886	235	4,565,000	1,088,990	5,400	.....	414,000	31,000	480	.....
Total for May, 1885	283	4,623,900	908,050	4,000	.....	693,000	1,000	5,579	.....

*The miscellaneous receipts from other ports during the month consisted of 1,000 barrels menhaden oil from Niantic, Conn

28.—THE FISHERIES OF GLOUCESTER, MASS., IN JUNE, 1887, WITH NOTES ON THOSE OF OTHER LOCALITIES.

By W. A. WILCOX.

The fisheries of Gloucester during the past month have not been as satisfactory as was anticipated. Vessels have sailed for the fishing grounds at frequent intervals, many of them starting on their first trips for the year, while others previously employed, after returning home with small fares, have refitted and again departed.

The receipts of cod at Gloucester during the month show a large increase over those of the corresponding month in 1886, but this increase is due to the large number of vessels from other ports landing their fares at Gloucester, and not to the greater abundance of fish. Codfish are reported to have been scarce on many of the distant fishing banks, and vessels have, as a rule, returned with only partial cargoes.