

## FISH FACTORY NEWSPAPER TRANSCRIPTIONS

The manufacture of oil from the fish known as menhaden or moss bunkers is comparatively a new thing, yet it is growing so rapidly that it is worth more than a passing notice. The West Creek correspondent of the Toms River *Courier* gives that journal a lengthy article on that subject, from which we summarize the following: At Fowler, Foot & Co.'s establishment near Tuckerton, two steam boilers furnished the motive power to engines of 60 horse-power. 400,000 fish can be used daily. The heaviest day's work the past season was 334,000 fish tried; largest yield of oil in two days from 442,000 fish was 5,800 gallons. The total catch of fish for the season was 6,000,000; yield of oil, 24,000 gallons; guano, 600 tons. 45 men are employed and for wages, incidentals, etc., about \$14,000 are yearly paid out. James E. Otis has a factory near Fowler, Foot & Co.'s. He did no fall fishing. His largest yield of oil in one day was in a former season, 2,800 gallons. This year's largest was only 840 gallons. 210,000 fish was the greatest number tried up in one day; whole number in the season 3,000,000; yield of oil, 9,000 gallons; guano, 400 tons. \$1.25 per 1,000 fish is the price paid. Paid out for labor \$1,800, for fish \$3,750, for incidentals \$5,000. Value of oil manufactured \$3,780; guano \$750. Men employed, 26. Unless these figures are wrongly given this establishment has been doing a losing business, not counting the incidentals which probably were expended in additions to the buildings, &c. Captain Cyrus N. Smith has a factory on Will's Island at the mouth of Mullica river. His figures are as follows for the season: Fish caught, 2,800,000; yield of oil, 10,000 gallons; guano, 200 tons; hands employed, 18; boilers, 6. Those engaged with the nets make about \$50 per month for the six months' season. Total amount paid to hands, \$4,325. The total amount paid out at the three factories for wages this year, amounted to \$23,875. Total number of fish caught, 11,809,000. Mt. Holly Herald 12/19/1874

Capt. Adams denies the report that he left the employ of C.N. Smith on account of a money trouble. He says the money he holds in the factory he has never called for and is well satisfied for it to remain where it is. There are no other connections of the family who have made large investments in vessel property, and being in need of a little cash is what makes the shoe pinch. Mt. Holly Herald 2/17/1883

Francis French [from Tuckerton] now owns and will run the menhaden oil factory, formerly owned and managed by Capt. C.N. Smith. Mr. Smith has gone into the cultivation of small fruits at Lower Bank, quite extensively, putting out thousands of strawberries, etc. of late and fine varieties. N.J. Mirror 6/10/1885

Mr. Wm. A. Sooy, the manager of Mr. Wharton's interests in this part of the State, has displayed push in this, his first season with the factory, as in other matters, for though fish are scarce or shy, he reported over 600,000 caught up to last week, the next best being Sooy, Cavileer & Co., their catch amounting to over 300,000. The other factories have not done much we understand until within a few days. The fish caught now are yielding six gallons of oil per thousand, a good yield. N.J. Mirror, Tuckerton Section, 7/29/1885

An artesian well is being sunk at Wharton's fish factory. At the depth of 300 feet magnetic ore was struck, which makes boring very difficult. The ore affects the drills so that they can hardly get them up and down. Mt. Holly Herald 5/8/1886

The menhaden fishermen will begin operations about the first of June. There are four factories in this county. Viz: Otis's factory at Tuckerton, Wharton's and Sooy & B Cavileer's at Seven Islands, and Francis French's on Wills's Island. They are now getting ready for the first run of menhaden. Mt. Holly Herald 5/8/1886

The fish factory, in the bay, belonging to Sooy, Cavileer & Co. has been rented by a company of fishermen from New Gretna who are working the "biz" quite successfully. Mt. Holly Herald 7/16/1887

The menhaden fishermen of this place are somewhat agitated over the statements made by some daily newspapers there being so few facts to warrant the publication of the statements. Mt. Holly Herald 7/30/1887

The menhaden fishermen are altogether pleased with the prospect. Ten of our young men leased the Cavileer & Sooy fish works about a month ago, and commenced business. They did not do much until last Saturday when the bookkeeper went over to Tuckerton and struck oil. This caused great delight. Last week they caught three hundred thousand fish, which gave them plenty of oil. Mt. Holly Herald 8/6/1887

The Menhaden fishery, fortunately has brought dollars to us this summer, whereas last, we realized but the cents. The production of the sea and the superabundant crops of the farmers will bring back new life

to us with the same inspiration as of old. "Everybody is in high glee over the prosperity of our land and sea." Tuckerton Beacon 1889

Menhaden guano is in increasing demand. The yearly shipment from James E. Otis's two factories was over 3000 tons. Mt. Holly Herald 3/21/1891

Mark W. Adams, George Valiant, Capt. John Cavileer and F.A. Adams have formed a partnership and will run a menhaden fish factory this coming season near Wharton's works. The steamer J.W. French has been chartered by them. Mt. Holly Herald 4/11/1891

We are informed by Mr. Otis that last year there was 600 tons of guano dried by the sun at the Wharton factory. This year there has been but 200 tons dried in this manner. This is quite a clear demonstration hat we have had two thirds more wet weather this year than last. Mt. Holly Herald 9/25/1891

An artesian well, to be 450 feet in depth, is going down at M.W. Adams fish factory, near New Gretna. Mt. Holly Herald 4/29/1892

Following two letters are written on company stationary:

American Nickel Works.  
Wharton Iron Furnace  
Hibernia Iron Ore.  
Batsto & Atsion Lands.  
Office of Joseph Wharton,  
No. 206, Philadelphia Bank Building  
Philadelphia,

Apr 26, 1897

(Does not appear to be in Wharton's handwriting, but rather written by his agent.)

Mr Alonzo Norton

Dear Sir,

Mr. James E. Otis of Tuckerton NJ is going some day this week to examine a boiler at Harrisville, with a view moving it to the fish factory.

Should the boiler suit Mr. Otis, Mr. Wharton bids me say you are to lend Mr. Otis whatever assistance he may require.

Mr. Otis will no doubt wire you when he expects to come.

Yours Truly,

Joseph Wharton

May 8, 1897

(appears to be written in Wharton's handwriting)

Mr. Alonzo Norton

Dear Sir

I have given permission to Mr. Otis to take from Harrisville paper mill the boiler that stands in the burned end of the mill-a nearly new locomotion boiler.

This boiler is to be moved on rollers down to the hay landing, mainly a mile down Wading River, where it is to go on a saw that Otis mill had . He says there are some iron rollers in the burned part of mill that will suit to move the boiler with. You can correspond with him about time and method of moving it.

Yours truly,

Joseph Wharton

Mr. Otis will order from you iron sticks that he wants for filing.

Charles H. Mathis has purchased the fish factory, and proposes to run it in interest of New Gretna workmen. It promises employment to a goodly number of men. Mt. Holly Herald 5/3/1899

Charles W. Mathis, of New Gretna, has been made manager of Joseph Wharton's fish factory at Crab Island, and is also in charge of Mr. Wharton's interests in this section. Mr. Wharton has recently purchased the Adams-Cavileer fish factory, also the Wills' island tract, and is said to be negotiating for several other important purchases. Mt. Holly Herald 5/3/1899

Charles H. Mathis has purchased the fish factory, and proposes to run it in the interest of New Gretna work men. It promises employment to a goodly number of men. Tuckerton Beacon 5/4/1899 (reprinted in 5/4/1933 "Out of The Past" Column)

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The menhaden steamer owned by Joseph Wharton commenced fishing last Monday. The factory has been rebuilt, and a big business is expected. Mt. Holly Herald 6/30/1900

The fishing steamers and the factory now in full working order. Large improvements have been made with new engines and machinery and the output is expected to be far larger than ever before. Mt. Holly Herald 6/30/1900

The steamers completed their season's work on Friday last. The *Active* is moored at the bridge and the other has been sent East. Mt. Holly Herald 11/23/1901

The new fishing steamer, *Ardent*, of the Newport Fertilizer Co., arrived from Baltimore last week and will be commanded by Capt. Geo Valiant. The steamer is 110 ft. long, 22 ft beam, 7 ft hold, and will carry 450,000 fish. She was built . . . for service at the Crab Island factory. [From the Tuckerton section] Mt. Holly Herald 7/12/1902

J. Curtis Kelly has resigned as superintendent of the Newport Fertilizer Co.'s plant at Crab Island near Tuckerton, to rebuild the Morris fertilizer factory on the western shore of Virginia. New Jersey Courier 8/20/1903

Captain Albert Cramer has taken command of the schooner *Myra Spear*, and will sail her for the Wharton Fisheries Co. Mt. Holly Herald 4/21/1906

. . . the steamer *Adroit* . . . encountered an immense school of drumfish . . . When the fish were landed at the factory [Crab Island] it was found that there were fully 3000 of them and that they would weigh 60 pounds each on average. Mt. Holly Herald 7/11/1903

B. F. Loveland, superintendent Crab Island fish factory, who has been in Lewes, Del, on business for the Fisheries Co., has returned. Mt. Holly Herald 2/17/1906

Capt. Harvey Cramer left last week for Tiverton, R.I., to resume command of his menhaden fishing steamer. Mt. Holly Herald 6/16/1906

B.F. Loveland, superintendent of Fisheries Co. factory at Lewes, has returned to Lewes after a week's vacation at home. Mt. Holly Herald 12/15/1906

Robert Souders is watchman at Crab Island where the fire that destroyed the factory is still burning. Mt. Holly Herald 2/23/1907

Mr. and Mrs. Frank Gaskill and family have gone to Tiverton, Rhode Island, where Mr. Gaskill is employed by the Fisheries Co. Mt. Holly Herald 2/23/1907

The McKeever steamers have been taken from their quarters and are now on fishing trips down east. Mt. Holly Herald 6/12/1915

