

Page 79 - George Leonard & the Fish Business

ISSUE: Issue 69

Published by Ronald Caplan on 1995/8/1

And they were great big ones. They used to catch great big pol? lock, about two and three feet long. And they're not there an3nnore; that's all gone. They used to catch shad in those traps, up 5- and 6- pound shad. And talk about disgraceful. We used to take them in the fish business. Fresh, of course-- they would come up every morning by boat. We used to have a boat on, bringing these things up in bulk--that's how much fish they'd catch in the trap. And we'd take the shad, and they'd squeeze them to find out which shad were roe shad, were females, and which were males. And the males they threw overboard. And the roe shad--instead of taking the roe out, which was marketa? ble--and the meat was fine in a shad, but it was full of bones, but it still could be used--they'd throw them away. So all they (kept) was the eggs.... And the only rea? son they were taken out like that was--no, I'm wrong--I'm ahead of my story. We didn't take the eggs out of the thing at all, out of the fish. We found out it was a female by squeezing it. Then we froze that particular female fish. They were packaged just as they are, frozen whole. They were shipped to the States, because you weren't allowed to ship the roe alone; had to have the whole fish. So we had to ship the whole fish to the States, so they could get at the roe in Philadelphia. And -they'd take the roe out and--they'd throw the fish away up there, I prestime. But this sort of stuff, it was so common. Nobody gave it any (thought)--everybody catch as much as you can, as cheap as you can, and as fast as you can. And the price--a codfish was 3C a pound, or 3 I/'2. And the big ones were 5