

Capt. George Merchant, Jr. was one of many people who donated fishing related items to the Great International Fisheries Exhibition held in London in 1883. A listing of those items was included in an 1884 U. S. Government publication about that exhibition

The final two pages are copies of the payment voucher for some of the items George Merchant, Jr. provided to the 1880 Berlin Fisheries Exhibition. Most of these items are still part of the collection owned by the Smithsonian Institute.

On the Water

Fox and Geese Game Board

This 9-inch square board with 32 holes was made for playing Fox and Geese, a game of strategy between two players. The 19 pegs representing geese and a single longer peg for the fox are long gone from this particular board made in Gloucester, Massachusetts. Fox and Geese was among the games played by fishermen during idle times on sailing schooners working in the North Atlantic fisheries. This board was part of a display on "Habits of Fishermen," at the International Fisheries Exhibition in London in 1883. Other games in the display, all from Gloucester, included cards, a checkerboard, backgammon, and a diamond puzzle.

The rules of play for Fox and Geese are simple: one player controls the fox, while the other controls the geese. The fox can move in a straight line in any direction and, as it jumps over geese, the geese are removed from the board. To win, the fox must break through the entire line of geese. The geese are only allowed to move forward or sideways. To win, they must corner the fox so it cannot move.

The *Oxford English Dictionary* cites a 1633 reference to the game from a play called *Fine Companion* by Shackerley Marmion: "Let him sit in the shop . . . and let him play at fox and geese with the foreman." The game was played in colonial America and, with minor variations, well into the 19th and 20th centuries.

This game board was one of several items donated to the Smithsonian by Capt. George Merchant Jr., of Gloucester.

ID Number:

AG*057950

Place Made:

Gloucester, Massachusetts

Material:

wood

Date:

1883

Dimensions:

8 7/8 x 8 1/8 x .43 in.; 22.5425 x 20.6375 x 1.1 cm

Source:

Captain George Merchant, Jr., through J. W. Collins



Other Views



IMPROVED SNATCH-BLOCK.

The outside straps are fastened at the end of the block by a bolt, which prevents the sides of the block from pinching the sheave. To lock and unlock the fastening is very easily accomplished by turning the block or hook to right angles, thus bringing the link even with the lip, which then is slipped off, the rope inserted, and the link replaced. This does away with the bolt and chain. Exhibited by Bagnall & Loud, Boston, Mass.

IMPROVED SEINE-BLOCK.

The improvement in this purse-seine block consists chiefly in having a lip to the slot where the purse-line is put in, and also in being provided with a lubricant that causes the sheave always to revolve easily. Exhibited by Bagnall & Loud, Boston, Mass.

SEINE-BLOCK. (Brown's patent.)

Made of galvanized iron. Used on seine-boats for pursuing the mackerel seine. Middletown, Conn. 29,432. Wilcox, Crittenden & Co.

PURSE-SEINE BLOCK. (Merchant's patent, 1882.)

A galvanized-iron block, with single sheave, triangular shell, ridges on sides to prevent fouling. Gloucester, Mass., 1882. 54,322. Made by Wilcox, Crittenden & Co. Invented by Capt. George Merchant, jr., and intended to take the place of ordinary purse-rolls at the foot of mackerel seines.

PATENT ROLLER SHEAVE.

Made of brass. Either the brass or iron roller sheave is much used in blocks. Made by Walter Coleman & Sons. 25,813.

IMPROVED LUG-ROLLER WITH IRON SHEAVE.

Exhibited by Bagnall & Loud, Boston, Mass.

SHEAVE-ROLLER BUSHING.

The rolls revolve on a sleeve or second pin, which in halyard blocks is one and one-half inches in diameter in place of three-quarter inch, thus giving a large bearing for the rolls to revolve on, the wear on the pin in the block being little, if any. Exhibited by Bagnall & Loud, Boston, Mass.

LUG-ROLLER BUSHING.

The washer, being flexible, will stay in its place until the rolls are entirely worn out, which is not the case with the old style of roller bushing. Bagnall & Loud, Boston, Mass.

DEAD-EYE.

Made of lignum-vitæ wood. Used to fasten standing-rigging to side of vessel. Made by Walter Coleman & Sons. 25,806.

ROUND-BLOCK.

Wooden shell, single galvanized-iron sheave, no hook or eye, strap score. Used for jib-sheets on small craft. Made by Walter Coleman & Sons. 25,812.

JIB-SHEET BLOCK.

Made of galvanized-iron. Peculiar to Gloucester and Boston fishing vessels. Sizes 1 and 2. The first size is used on small vessels and the second size on large vessels. Middletown, Conn. 29,460. Wilcox, Crittenden & Co.

OUTRIGGER-BLOCK.

Iron, one sheave, swivel-hook. Total length, 9½ inches. Gloucester, Mass., 1883. 54,698. Capt. George Merchant, jr. Attached to mackerel-pocket outrigger, or boat-boom on mackerel schooner.

SNATCH-BLOCK FOR PURSE-SEINES.

Made of galvanized iron. Used on seine-boats for pursing mackerel and menhaden seines. Gift of Higgins & Gifford. 25,179.

SEINE-BLOCK.

Made of galvanized iron. In general use along the New England coast for pursing the mackerel seine. Varies slightly from the Higgins & Gifford or Cape Ann pattern, and meets with about the same favor. Middletown, Conn. 54,711. Wilcox, Crittenden & Co.

SEINE-BOAT BLOCK.

Made of galvanized iron. The first style of metallic seine-boat block used at Gloucester, Mass. Middletown, Conn. 29,462. Wilcox, Crittenden & Co.

HEART BLOCK.

Made of lignum-vitæ wood. Used to secure the standing or fixed rigging to the hull of the vessel. Made by Walter Coleman & Sons. 25,804.

IMPROVED SHEET-BLOCK WITH BOOM BUFFER COMBINED.

Has rubber cushions at its upper and lower ends, which are intended to ease off the strain when the boom jibes over suddenly. Intended to hang on the boom. Exhibited by Bagnall & Loud, Boston, Mass.

HARCOURT'S PATENT IMPROVED INSIDE IRON-STRAPPED BLOCK.

This improvement consists in having a solid partition in a double or triple block, and having four straps in a double and six in a triple block, each strap being let into each side of every partition. Exhibited by Bagnall & Loud, Boston, Mass.

CROSS PUZZLE.

Six oblong blocks of hard wood ingeniously notched so that they can be put together in such a manner that one binds the whole; the puzzle is to do this. Gloucester, Mass., 1883. 56,829. Gift of Capt. George Merchant, jr. This is considered one of the most difficult puzzles made or used on fishing vessels.

ROW-GALLEY PUZZLE.

A frame-work of wood, consisting of two side-pieces and four cross-bars, the two end-bars having holes in them; rove through and hitched around these is a piece of double line. The puzzle is to unmoor or remove the line from the frame-work without using the free ends. This is called "unmooring the row-galley." Gloucester, Mass., 1883. 56,830. Gift of Capt. George Merchant, jr.

RING PUZZLE.

Consists of an iron ring separated in one place, and having an endless string attached by a "round" turn around the ring. The puzzle is to get the string clear without unwinding it directly. Gloucester, Mass., 1883. 56,827. Gift of Capt. George Merchant, jr.

WOODEN TOP.

Ash; pointed base; square sides in the middle; round handle at top. Letters A, N, P, and T. on the squares. Gloucester, Mass., 1883. 56,826. Gift of Capt. George Merchant, jr. This is used to play for buttons, cents, &c., by the crews of fishing vessels. Each player spins it in turn, and if it falls with "A" up he takes all the stakes; with "N" he gets nothing; "P" up he puts down; and with "T" up he takes the stake he ventured.

BATTLE.

Several flat shells strung on a withe made of a cedar or spruce twig. Diameter of withe, $7\frac{1}{2}$ inches. Neah Bay, Washington Territory. 1,034. Collected by James G. Swan.

LITERATURE.**FISHERMEN'S LITERATURE.**

- * Collection of works of fiction. Loss of the Grosvenor, &c., by W. Clark Russel; Peter Simple, and other stories by Marryatt, &c. Gloucester, Mass., 1883. U. S. Fish Commission.

FISHERMEN'S MEMORIAL AND RECORD BOOK.

The Fishermen's Memorial and Record Book, containing an account of the losses of fishing vessels and fishermen, hair-breadth es-

G.—HABITS OF FISHERMEN.

72. MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS, GAMES, AND LITERATURE OF THE FISHERMEN.

MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS.

COLLECTION OF MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS, SONG AND MUSIC BOOKS.

Accordion, violin, harmonica, music book, and fishermen's ballads.

This collection represents the musical instruments, &c., most commonly carried on fishing vessels.

GAMES.

CARDS.

Pack of cards which have been used on fishing vessel *Reporter*, of Gloucester, Mass., 1883.

FISHERMEN'S CHECKER-BOARD.

A half-barrel head, with checker-board marked with red chalk on one side. Checkers made of a piece of an old boot-leg. Gloucester, Mass., 1883. 57,949. Gift of Capt. J. W. Collins. These are easily improvised, and are the kind of checker-boards most commonly used.

CANVAS CHECKER AND BACKGAMMON BOARDS.

A piece of canvas, hemmed on the ends, with a checker-board painted on one side and a backgammon-board on the other. 22 inches square. Gloucester, Mass., 1883. 56,832. U. S. Fish Commission. Canvas checker and backgammon boards are often carried on fishing schooners.

FOX AND GEESE BOARD.

A plain, square piece of board, with 32 holes; 19 pegs for geese and 1 peg—the longest—for the fox. Board 9 inches square. Gloucester, Mass., 1883. 57,950. Gift of Capt. George Merchant, jr.

DIAMOND PUZZLE.

Six small pieces of wood notched so that when put together each binds all the rest. Gloucester, Mass., 1883. 56,831. Gift of Capt. George Merchant, jr. Used to pass away idle time on fishing vessels when making passages, &c. The puzzle consists in putting the blocks together in the right positions.

LAYING OUT SHAD-SEINE.

An India-ink sketch, showing a fishing crew engaged in shooting a shad seine in North Carolina waters. The seine is upwards of a mile in length, one-half of it being loaded on a small paddle-wheeled steamer, while the other half is loaded on a twenty-four oared seine-boat. The two boats proceed to the stake which marks the center of the fishing-ground, a mile or more from the shore; when they proceed in opposite directions, paying out the seine as they go, and carrying the line to the beach, where it is attached to drums worked by steam-engines which are employed in hauling the seine. Size, 30 by 40 inches. Washington, D. C., 1882. Henry W. Elliott.

TRAILING NETS.**BEAM TRAWL.**

For dragging along the bottom at a distance from the shore. 32,720.
Made by J. G. Adam. U. S. Fish Commission.

PURSING NETS.**PURSE-SEINE.**

One hundred and sixty-five fathoms long, 10 fathoms or 500 meshes deep, $2\frac{1}{2}$ -inch mesh; made of No. 10 twine. American Net and Twine Company, Boston, Mass. These purse-seines range in length from 120 to 220 fathoms, and from 500 to 1,000 meshes in depth, reaching the depth of 20 to 30 fathoms of water. The average mesh is $2\frac{1}{2}$ inches. They are made of fine Sea Island cotton twine, and cost from \$750 to \$1,500 complete. About 300 are now in use on the coast of North America. The pursing weight varies from 100 to 150 pounds.

HERRING PURSE-SEINE.

American Net and Twine Company, Boston, Mass. 32,781.

MACKEREL PURSE-SEINE.

Model of purse-seine. George Merchant, Gloucester, Mass.

PHOTOGRAPHS, DRAWINGS, AND PAINTINGS, ILLUSTRATIVE OF THE PURSE-NET FISHERY.**PURSE-SEINE ON SEINE-BOAT.**

Photograph of the seine-boat belonging to schooner E. W. Merchant, of Gloucester, Mass; fully manned; showing the seine properly stowed in the boat, ready to be "shot." Size, 8 by 10 inches. Taken at Rockport, Mass., 1882. (62) 1,831. U. S. Fish Commission.

MACKEREL CRUISING.

Photographic view of a fleet of thirty or forty schooners, engaged in the mackerel purse seine fishery, cruising about on the fish-

MINNOW AND FISH CRATE—Continued.

pounds. Every angler knows the difficulty of keeping minnows alive and the frequent failure of all ordinary means for preserving them. It is claimed that the crate meets this want. Floating beside or behind a boat its drag is scarcely perceptible. It occupies so little depth that danger from fastening on logs, &c., is almost entirely obviated. When folded, it occupies so little space that one could easily carry it under his buttoned coat during a walking excursion. Another feature that highly recommends this crate is the ease with which the bait is secured when a fresh minnow is required. No lifting is necessary. By simply tipping up the bow, the lower half or stern is submerged, leaving the door clear above the water and convenient to the hand."

MINNOW-CRATE.

A small collapsible crate made of wood and canvas. Used by anglers to keep small fish alive which are to be used as live bait. Exhibited by N. A. Osgood, Battle Creek, Mich.

MINNOW-PAIL.

Tin; tubular; flat bottom and top; painted green, with lettering "The gem fish-bait pail." Air-holes in top; movable tray inside. Height, 14 inches; diameter, 1 foot; capacity, 16 quarts. U. S. Fish Commission. 57,674. Used to carry live minnows for bait.

LIVE CARS FOR FISH AND LOBSTERS. (For description see Sec. K.).**MACKEREL POCKET.**

A small model of a mackerel pocket, made of cotton netting. Used by the mackerel fishermen in connection with the purse-seine fishery. When more mackerel are taken than can be dressed at once the surplus is turned into the mackerel pocket, which is suspended from out-riggers fastened to the vessel's deck, the bottom extending 6 to 10 feet below the surface of the water. The mackerel are thus kept alive until such time as they can be cared for. Exhibited by George Merchant, jr., Gloucester, Mass.

FISH INCLOSURE (photograph).

A large inclosure on Detroit River, made by staking off a portion of the shoal water along the bank, and used for keeping fish alive until such time as there is a demand for them in the market. The seine is frequently drawn to the mouth of the inclosure and the fish allowed to enter without being handled. Detroit, Mich., 1882. (751) 2,212. U. S. Fish Commission.

SQUID-JIG.

Pattern of 1846. Made of brass pins seized with cotton twine; lead sinker $3\frac{1}{2}$ inches long. Gloucester, Mass. 54,480. Gift of David W. Low. Used to catch squid for cod-bait.

SQUID-JIG.

Style of 1850. Made of 8 brass pins molded in lead sinker $3\frac{1}{2}$ inches long. Gloucester, Mass. 39,177. Gift of Daniel McAskell. Used in catching squid for bait.

SQUID-JIG.

Made by fishermen on shipboard. Brass pins molded to lead sinker 2 inches long. Gloucester, Mass. 57,947. Gift of Captain George Merchant, jr. Used to catch squid for cod-bait.

SQUID LINE AND JIG.

White cotton line on wooden reel; blue cotton ganging; jig made of brass pins molded to lead sinker $3\frac{1}{2}$ inches long. Gloucester, Mass. 54,414. U. S. Fish Commission. Used in hand-line dory cod-fishing on Grand Bank to catch squid for bait.

SQUID-JIG.

Made by fishermen on ship-board. Brass pins seized with tarred cotton twine to lead sinker $3\frac{1}{2}$ inches long. Gloucester, Mass., 1880. 39,176. U. S. Fish Commission. Used to catch squid for cod-bait.

SQUID-JIG.

Made of brass pins molded to lead sinker $3\frac{1}{4}$ inches long, painted red. Gloucester, Mass., 1878. 32,722. Gift of Robert H. Hurlburt. Used to catch squid for cod-bait.

SQUID-JIG.

Made of brass pins molded to lead sinker 3 inches long. Gloucester, Mass., 1878. 32,721. Gift of Robert H. Hurlburt. Used in catching squid for cod-bait.

SQUID-JIG.

Made of brass pins molded to lead sinker 3 inches long, painted red. Gloucester, Mass., 1876. 25,776. Collected by A. R. Crittenden. Used to catch squid for cod-bait.

SQUID-JIG FORMER.

Made of soapstone in truncated form, with longitudinal grooves for shaping pins for squid-jigs. Rockport, Mass., 1877. 29,447. Gift of John B. Parsons.

RU 747C bx 2 "M68"

THE UNITED STATES

To *George Huerchans Jr. Dr.*

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE, BUREAU OF FISHERIES, WASHINGTON, D. C.

U. S. Commission of Fish and Fisheries.

BERLIN FISHERY EXHIBITION.

No. *M. 68*

Date of Account, *March 24, 1880*

Name, *George Huerchans Jr.*

Amount, \$ *143.⁰⁰*

When paid, _____

I CERTIFY that the within account is correct; that the articles or services charged therein were required and furnished on account of the subject above mentioned; that the same were necessary therefor, and that the charges are reasonable.

William H. Bell

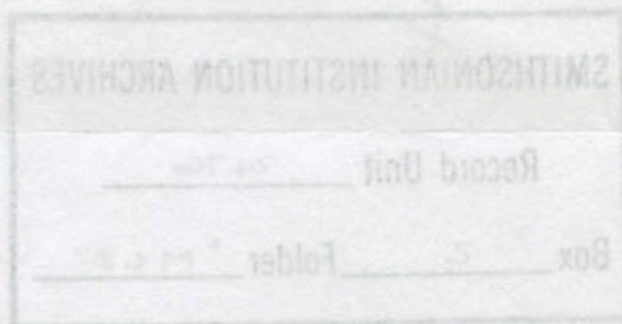
Approved: _____

R

THE UNITED STATES,

To *George Merchant Jr., Dr.*

1880 .	ON ACCOUNT OF EXPENSES OF BERLIN FISHERY EXHIBITION.	AMOUNT.	
		Dollars.	Cents.
<i>Arch 24</i>	<i>No 1 Seine</i>	<i>125</i>	<i>00</i>
	<i>36 hours labor mending Bailing</i>	<i>16</i>	<i>88</i>
	<i>31 yds. second hand Suck C¹⁵</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>65</i>
	<i>6 Thimbles .10</i>		<i>60</i>
	<i>5 lbs. Hemp Rope .18</i>		<i>90</i>
	<i>2 " Manila .15</i>		<i>30</i>
	<i>24 ft. Lumber</i>		<i>48</i>
	<i>Teaming</i>		<i>30</i>
		<i>143</i>	<i>03</i>



Received at *Gloucester Mass.*, of *R. C. Morgan*

Disbursing Agent, State Department, this _____ day of _____, 18 _____,
One hundred forty three dollars — *three* — cents, in full of the above account.

\$143.03

Geo Merchant Jr