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TRADITIONAL USES OF FISH HOUSES IN OTTER COVE



ACADIA NATIONAL PARK
SPECIAL ETHNOGRAPHIC REPORT





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TRADITIONAL USES OF FISH HOUSES IN OTTER COVE

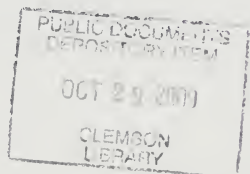


A Research Report by


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2010-0005-P



The cover image is a photograph of fish houses on the eastern shore of Otter Cove as it was in 1900-1920. The photo, contributed by Virgil Dorr, was published in a history of Otter Creek by Thomas G. Richardson, and appeared in *Mount Desert: An Informal History*, ed. by Gunnar Hansen (1989: Town of Mount Desert, Maine). Norman Walls, a resident of Otter Creek, remembered these fish houses were in use when he was growing up in the 1940s and '50s. He recalled they were owned by the following fishermen (from left to right): Ansel Davis (first two structures), unknown (Richardson?), Chester Walls, Mike and Shirley Bracey, and Harold Walls.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report presents the results of ethnohistorical research about the customary and traditional uses and practices associated with fish houses in Otter Cove (Mt. Desert Island, Maine) in the late 19th and 20th centuries. Due to the absence of historical records on this topic, this study relies heavily on information provided in oral history interviews with knowledgeable local experts. While the study is focused on Otter Cove, an area within Acadia National Park, it draws on information about the use and function of fish houses throughout Mt. Desert Island and in adjoining coastal regions of Maine. A more in-depth research project on the ethnohistory of fishing and fish houses in Otter Cove will be carried out starting in late 2008.

According to the interviewees, fish houses were simply constructed utilitarian structures located on the shore in sheltered coves and inlets in places that were convenient to fishing grounds. They served as the operations center or base for small-scale fishing activities by an individual fisherman. They were used principally for cod and lobster fishing, but also for haddock, cusk, hake, halibut, skate, herring, mackerel and menhaden. They provided a location for preparing and storing bait made from fish and shellfish, baiting tub trawls, and manufacturing, repairing and storing gear such as lobster traps and buoys, trawl lines, seines, and bait barrels, as well as tools and supplies. They were often formerly associated with flakes (drying platforms) used for curing salted cod. They also provided a social space for fishermen as they worked preparing gear and bait for the next day's fishing, particularly when associated with multiple fishermen in the same community.

Fish houses were used throughout the year, and for day and night fishing, as fishermen pursued multiple fishing strategies. They were erected and used at places convenient for fishing and fishermen may or may not have owned the land upon which they stood. There was no evidence that land ownership eventually accrued or was transferable by fishermen who did not initially own the land under their shack.

Fish houses ranged in size from the simplest, perhaps an eight foot square shack with a flat roof, to a 12 by 14 foot structure with a peaked roof and a window in the gable ends. They were usually associated with a landing place for a skiff or a punt, which may have been a small dock but more often was a slip fashioned by clearing beach cobbles from a narrow run up the shore from low water. They were basic structures, usually made

out of rough hewn, unpainted planks or scavenged materials, and were located at any site that furnished some protection from the open sea and was favorable for fishing. Their appearance was not neat and tidy; they were functional working sites and often had the by-products of construction or some used equipment scattered around.

Prior to the mid-twentieth century (after which fishing practices began to change dramatically), fish houses were ubiquitous along the coast of Maine and on Mt. Desert Island in any small cove or inlet suitable as a base for fishing. In the 1870s, fishing was the major occupation in Otter Cove, and there were 25 households with fishermen catching mainly cod and lobster, and other species. Written records (deeds) describe the presence of fish houses on the east and west sides of Otter Cove since the 1860s. Their appearance is also documented in historical photographs dating probably to the 1880s and '90s (more research is needed to provide reliable dates). The photograph appearing on the cover of this report, dated to 1900-1920, shows six fish houses and associated equipment located on the eastern shore.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Executive Summary	i
Table of Contents	iii
List of Figures	iv
Acknowledgements	v
Overview Map of Otter Cove	vi
Chapter 1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND	1
Research Scope	6
Research Methods	8
Chapter 2. TRADITIONAL PRACTICES AND CUSTOMARY USES OF FISH HOUSES ON MOUNT DESERT ISLAND	11
Terms of Reference	11
Traditional Uses and Cultural Practices	13
<i>Base of Fishing Operations</i>	15
<i>Preparing and Storing Bait</i>	17
<i>Storing, Building and Repairing Equipment</i>	19
<i>A Social Space for Fishermen</i>	21
Structures	23
<i>Boat Landings, Slips and Docks</i>	24
Customary Use and Land Ownership	26
Locations	30
Chapter 3. FISHING AND FISH HOUSES IN OTTER COVE IN THE 1870s	35
Fish Houses in Otter Cove in the 1870s	38
<i>Western (Otter Creek) Side of the Cove</i>	38
<i>Eastern (Bar Harbor) Side of the Cove</i>	41
Appendix 1: List of Interviewees	45
Appendix 2: "The Baiting House" by Harold Walls	47
Appendix 3: "Picking the Slip" by Harold Walls	51
Appendix 4: Otter Creek Cod Fishermen in 1870	53
Appendix 5: Otter Creek Fishermen in 1800	55
References Cited	57

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1	Sketch Map: Otter Cove Fish Houses (1968)	1
Figure 2	Otter Cove Fish Houses (c. 1960)	2
Figure 3	Fish House with Lobster Traps, Otter Cove (c. 1960)	2
Figure 4	Fish House with Punt, Otter Cove (c. 1960)	3
Figure 5	Small Fish House with Punt and Lobster Traps, Otter Cove (c. 1960)	3
Figure 6	Sketch Map: Otter Cove Fish Houses (1974)	4
Figure 7	Wooden Post used for Tying Off Punt, Otter Cove (c. 1960)	4
Figure 8	Wooden Post with remnant of boat slip, Otter Cove (2008)	4
Figure 9	Fish House owned by Otter Creek Aid Society, Otter Cove (2007)	5
Figure 10	Boat Slip and Dock at Fish House owned by Otter Creek Aid Society, Otter Cove (2006)	5
Figure 11	Fish House, Bass Harbor (2006)	7
Figure 12	Fish House, Bass Harbor (2006)	7
Figure 13	Fish House, Stonington (2007)	8
Figure 14	Fish House, New Harbor (2007)	8
Figure 15	Map showing Fish Houses in Wonsqueak Harbor, Schoodic Peninsula (1934)	12
Figure 16	Fish Houses, Preble Cove, Cranberry Island (n.d.)	14
Figure 17	Fish House with Barrel, Norwood Cove (n.d.)	17
Figure 18	The Baiting Shed Fish House, Otter Cove (c. 1960)	19
Figure 19	Fish House, West Side of Otter Cove (n.d.)	21
Figure 20	Fish House with Lobster Trap, Norwood Cove (n.d.)	23
Figure 21	Fish Houses, Otter Cove (1900-1920)	24
Figure 22	Map of Otter Cove (1887)	27
Figure 23	Large Fish House on Wharf, Bass Harbor (2006)	29
Figure 24	Wharf Used for Lobster Fishing, Bass Harbor (2006)	30
Figure 25	Fish House, Stonington (2007)	31
Figure 26	Fish House, Stonington (2007)	32
Figure 27	Dock or Boat Landing in Otter Cove (n.d.)	40
Figure 28	Otter Cove in 1880	43
Figure 29	The "Baiting House" in Otter Cove	48
Figure 30	Harold Walls standing next to his punt at the top of the slip	52

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The research for this report was aided and advanced with the interest and assistance received from many individuals. First, without the participation of the interviewees, all of whom contributed important information about the history and use of fish houses in Otter Cove and elsewhere on Mt. Desert Island and nearby areas, this report simply could not have been written. The description of the customary and traditional uses of fish houses is almost wholly the result of their knowledge and experience, and their interest in history. Each of the following local experts, listed in alphabetical order, contributed valuable information about fish houses or the community of Otter Cove, and sometimes both: Kendall Davis, Carroll M. Haskell, Malcolm Pettegrew, Paul Richardson, Ralph Stanley, Earl Thurlow, Norman Walls, Robert and Donald Walls. Everyone was generous with their time, shared their information openly, and made unique contributions to this report. I will give particular thanks to the Walls brothers, Robert and Donald, who shared a great deal about their own experience and the life of their father, Harold, a lifelong Otter Cove fisherman. Special recognition is also due to Ralph Stanley, who among his many remarkable accomplishments has developed a deep and extensive knowledge of the marine history of Mt. Desert and surrounding islands. The members of the Thurlow family were very open with their experiences as lobstermen and always available for a friendly stopover during my several trips to the island.

The staff of local historical societies were also very helpful during this project, including those at the Jesup Memorial Library, Northeast Harbor Library, and the Mount Desert Historical Society. I would especially like to thank Bob Pyle at the Northeast Harbor Library who was very generous with the images in their collections and provided some very useful documentation of these images. The staff of the Olmsted Center for Landscape Preservation at State St. were also helpful, as always, and shared some useful maps of fish houses in Wonsqueak Harbor, notably Jeff Killion, Lisa Nowak and Mike Commisso. Finally, the staff at Acadia National Park welcomed me and provided a great deal of useful information during my trips to the park. Rebecca Cole-Will and John McDade did a lot of digging into the archives of the William Otis Sawtelle Collections, and also scanned many images for me, which saved me a lot of time. The following individuals were particularly helpful: Sheridan Steele (Superintendent), Len Bobinchock (Deputy Superintendent), Mike Blaney (Land Resources Specialist), Rebecca Cole-Will (Cultural Resources Program Manager), David Manski (Chief, Division of Resource Management), John McDade (Museum Technician), and Kevin Cochary (Acting Chief Ranger).

OVERVIEW MAP OF OTTER COVE



Courtesy of Karen B. Anderson, Acadia National Park.

CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

This report was prepared in response to a request from resource managers at Acadia National Park (the Park) to investigate the traditional uses and cultural practices associated with fish houses or fish stands that were once common along the coast of Maine. The need for this project arose in connection with historical and ethnographic questions asked by the Park regarding the traditional uses of such structures in Otter Cove, the cultural practices and customs associated with the use of fish houses, and the continuity of these practices in the Cove. Because they were identified and conveyed in land deeds, it was known that fish houses were located and used in the Cove since 1870. But little was known about the specific customs and practices associated with the use of these structures, and how long they may have been present in Otter Creek.

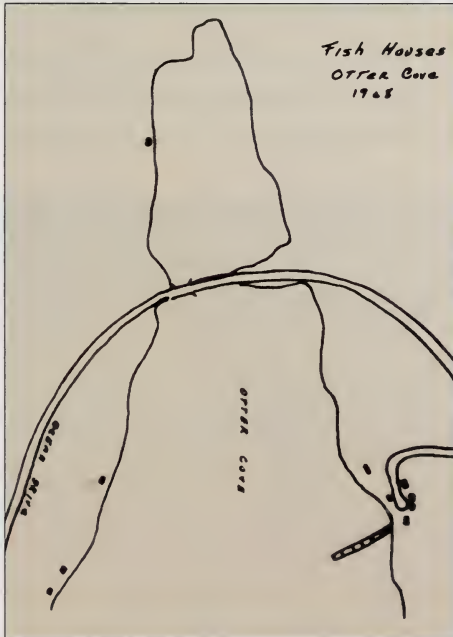


Figure 1: Sketch Map: Otter Cove Fish Houses (1968); courtesy of Acadia National Park.

A sketch map of Otter Cove fish houses dated 1968 in the Park's records of "special use" permits shows that there were ten fish houses in Otter Cove in 1968; six of these were on the east (Bar Harbor) side and four were on the western (Otter Creek) shore (see Figure 1 page 1, also see Figures 2-5 pages 2-3). On the eastern side, one had been used by Harold Walls since at least 1954 (Letter from Warner M. Forsell to William Browder, Jr., dated May 28, 1981). It continued to be used by Harold Walls and his son Robert through 1990. Permits relating to four other fishermen, Hillard Walls, Robert T. Davis, Maynard Hagerthy and Ellwood Bracy, date variously from 1968 through 1985. By 1974,



Figure 2: Otter Cove Fish Houses (c. 1960); courtesy of Robert Walls. This is a detail of a larger image of the entire cove, which was made into a post card with the large fish house touched up in red. A copy of the post card is in the collection of Acadia National Park.

there were only three fish houses there (see Figure 6 page 4); one of these burned in 1977 and another, Davis's shack, was removed by the Park in 1984 after it was determined to be in dilapidated condition (Permit File Notes). Today, all that remains is a single post to mark



Figure 3: Fish House with Lobster Traps, Otter Cove (c. 1960); courtesy of Robert Walls.



Figure 4: Fish House with Punt, Otter Cove (c. 1960); courtesy of Robert Walls.

the site used by the Wallses to fasten a running line to their punt so they could pull it to safe anchorage offshore after landing on the beach (see Figures 7-8 page 5).

On the western (Otter Creek) side in the outer cove (that is, outside the causeway formed by Ocean Drive), there were three fish houses noted on the 1968 sketch map



Figure 5: Small Fish House with Punt and Lobster Traps, Otter Cove (c. 1960); courtesy of Robert Walls.

(Figure 1), but none in 1974 (Figure 6). Currently there is one fish house located in the outer cove which is situated on a small lot owned by the Otter Creek Aid Society (see Figures 9-10 page 5). It is not known when this structure was last used for fishing or lobstering.

Fish houses were a staging area for all types of small-scale fishing carried out along the coast of Maine, including Mt. Desert Island and Otter Cove, during the 19th and 20th centuries. Their use can be traced back to the fish drying stations that were erected along the coast of Maine since the earliest days of European exploration.

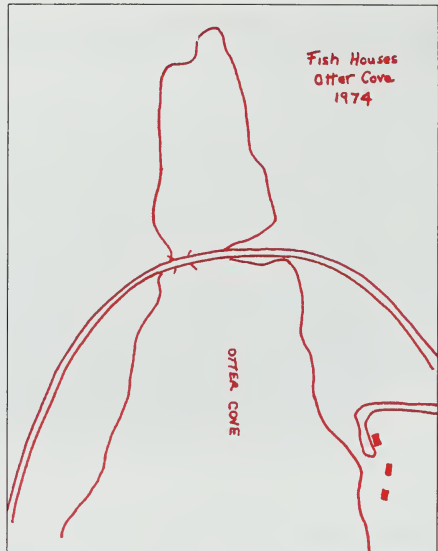


Figure 6: Sketch Map: Otter Cove Fish Houses (1974); courtesy of Acadia National Park.

Years and years ago they used to go to a lot of different places, and they used to set up a stand right on the shore where they could cure their fish. They did it on the Maine Coast years before, like on Monhegan Island. Vessels would come from Europe and they'd fish on the coast, and cure

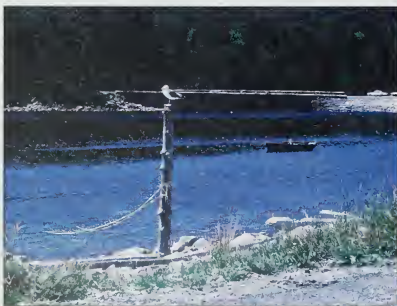


Figure 7: Wooden Post used for Tying Off Punt, Otter Cove (c. 1960); courtesy of Robert Walls.



Figure 8: Wooden Post with remnant of boat slip, Otter Cove (2008); photo by C. Smythe.



Figure 9: Fish House owned by Otter Creek Aid Society, Otter Cove (2006); photo by C. Smythe.

their fish right on the island, and they would load them up and take them back to Europe, to France, Spain or wherever they come from — [in the] 1600s. Even in the '40s and '50s, Beal's down here [Southwest Harbor] had flakes on the top of their buildings, that they used to dry fish. (Stanley Interview)

Fish houses were described as having been located “anywhere” along the coast that offered a fisherman some shelter. On Mt. Desert Island, the use of fish houses began to fall off in the 1950s as fish populations crashed and fishing activity shifted towards



Figure 10: Boat Slip and Dock at Fish House owned by Otter Creek Aid Society, Otter Cove (2006); photo by C. Smythe.

larger, more centralized facilities on wharves located in the better harbors. This shift occurred gradually over several decades due to numerous factors including the massive decline of certain fish species, increasing availability of other kinds of work, changes in fishing gear and methods, skyrocketing value of shoreside lots and the growing prevalence of notions of private property. Even today, a few small fish houses are used by lobstermen in places such as Bass Harbor, Stonington and other small harbors on the coast of Maine, but they are rare and are threatened by the continuing escalation in the value of shore property (see Figures 11-14 pages 7-8). However, these contemporary structures are situated on developed wharves, that is, docks supported with pile-driven posts, which was never characteristic of the small fish houses that are the subject of this study.

Research Scope

The purpose of this research project is to develop a foundation of ethnographic information about the use of fish shacks and fish house stands, and historic fishing practices, in Otter Cove. The research methods combined historical and archival research with oral history interviews of knowledgeable local experts. Due to the absence of extensive historical records of fish houses, this study draws heavily on the oral history interviews.

The research was intended to address the following questions:

1. What were the customary practices and rights associated with ownership of a fish shack and fish house stand?
2. How widespread were fish shacks and fish house stands?
3. What activities (kinds of fishing) were associated with these structures?
4. What or how were these structures used; for what purposes? This discussion (#1-4) will need to extend over a wider area than just Otter Cove. For example, other parts of Mt. Desert, Schoodic, and perhaps other areas as appropriate. In part, this depends on the amount and extent that information is available on this subject.
5. What was the use of Otter Cove circa 1874 (fishing and other)?
6. Describe the fishing equipment (boats, gear, etc.) used in Otter Cove at that time.
7. Describe the community existing in Otter Cove at that time.
8. What kind of fishing structures existed in Otter Cove at that time?
9. What did a fish shack and fish house stand mean in Otter Cove at that time?



Figure 11 Fish House, Bass Harbor (2006); photo by C. Smythe.

In this report, the name ‘Otter Cove’ is used to refer to the small inlet at the mouth of Otter Creek, located below the village of that name, and the fish houses that were situated there. ‘Otter Cove’ will be used to distinguish this area from that of the village, although on early maps this cove is also named Otter Creek. The ‘Otter Cove’ that is located on the east side of Otter Cliffs is not described in this report.



Figure 12 Fish House, Bass Harbor (2006); photo by C. Smythe.

Research Methods

The author conducted historical and archival research and eight oral history interviews over the past 18 months as time permitted. Due to other responsibilities, the researcher was only able to conduct research intermittently for a few short periods (2-5 days in duration), with long gaps of 3-6 months between research trips from Boston. Some of the

historical records, such as census data, were available in the Boston area. The research effort was sufficient for documenting the salient patterns of traditional use of fish houses in Otter Cove and throughout Mount Desert Island, and major aspects of the history of fishing in Otter Creek. Due to the richness of the topic and the high value placed on Otter Cove by descendants of people who fished there, the park plans to conduct a more detailed ethnohistorical research project focused on the Otter Cove area. The follow-up study will provide information useful for park management and public education needs, as well as contributing to increased public understanding and enjoyment of Otter Cove.



Figure 13: Fish House, Stonington (2007); photo by C. Smythe.



Figure 14 Fish House, New Harbor (2007); photo by C. Smythe.

The historical and archival research involved searching for published and unpublished books, articles, reports, essays, newspaper articles, historical maps and photographs, and information such as population and census data. Collections at the following repositories were searched:

- 1) William Otis Sawtelle Collections and Research Center, Acadia National Park
- 2) Jesup Memorial Library, Bar Harbor, Maine
- 3) Town of Mt. Desert Archives, Northeast Harbor Library, Northeast Harbor, Maine
- 4) Mount Desert Historical Society, Mount Desert, Maine
- 5) National Archives and Records Administration, Waltham, Massachusetts

Park files in the archives and offices of Acadia National Park were searched for information about property deeds, special use permits, and general historical information about Otter Creek and the Schoodic Peninsula. Subject-matter experts were contacted at the University of Maine (Department of Anthropology and the Maine Folklife Center), Library of Congress (American Folklife Center), and Memorial University of Newfoundland (Department of Folklore).

Eight oral history interviews were conducted for this project. All interviews were recorded and transcribed. Interviews were carried out with local experts and knowledgeable individuals to obtain historical information about the village of Otter Creek, the traditional use of fish houses in Otter Cove, and the traditional use and practices associated with fish houses elsewhere on the island and beyond. One interview about the latter topic was conducted with a knowledgeable person from Deer Island, where the traditional practices associated with fish houses are more contemporaneous than on Mount Desert Island. This report draws on the oral history information for the purpose of presenting a composite description of the customary uses and functions of fish houses. These interviews elicited a great deal of descriptive information about fishing practices during the second half of the 20th century. A list of Interviewees is provided in Appendix 1.

CHAPTER 2. TRADITIONAL PRACTICES AND CUSTOMARY USES OF FISH HOUSES ON MOUNT DESERT ISLAND

Terms of Reference

The small structures described in this report have been referred to by various terms including bait shed, bait house, fish house, fish house stand, fish stand, and (in Canada), fish stage. All of these terms are used in reference to the same type of structure and are associated with similar uses and functions of the building and the site on which it is placed. One interviewee, whose family migrated to Mount Desert Island from a community further down east, explained that the use of specific terms —such as “bait shed,” “bait house,” or “fish house” —was localized and depended on where you were on the coast (Pettegrew Interview). “Bait shed” and “bait house” may also connote a smaller sized building with a more limited use. A bait house or bait shed was a small wooden shack used for storing lobster bait, usually a barrel or more of fermenting fish that smelled very strongly.

Some of them would just be maybe 8-feet square size, 8 by 8 maybe, a real small one, because all you needed to have in there if you were lobstering would be a couple of good, tight pork barrels. Any of the Mom and Pop grocery store guys would save you a barrel and, you know, he’d sell it to you. My father had two. The secret amongst the fishermen was you had to have bait that really was rank.
(Haskell Interview)

On Mount Desert Island, the terms “fish house” and “fish stand” are prevalent. “Generally, it’s just a little shack on the shore where they kept their gear. Sometimes they had fish flakes [drying platforms] there. It all depends upon how much fishing they did” (Stanley Interview). This local expert suggested that ‘stand’ could mean a specific place, location or feature in the landscape, in this case one used for fishing-related activity. He made an analogy with the phrase, a ‘stand of trees.’ Another individual associated the term ‘stand’ with the sale of fish products (as in a ‘vegetable stand’ at a market, or a roadside ‘fruit stand’) (Norman Walls Interview). In this usage, a ‘fish stand’ would refer to the site or platform from which fish products were sold to or picked up by a buyer. Since they did not sell anything in Otter Cove, this local resident used the term ‘fish house.’

On the Canadian coast, the term ‘fish stage’ is more universal. These structures were ubiquitous along the coast and until recently were used very extensively in the Canadian Atlantic Maritimes, particularly in the small scale cod fishing industry. Described by one investigator as the most important building of a complex of structures used in Newfoundland cod fisheries, the ‘stage’ was the location of fish processing (preparing cod fillets) prior to arranging them on flakes for curing. The building was the site for initial processing (butchering, filleting and soaking in brine) before the prepared product was brought out to dry (Pocius 2006).

Legal descriptions and historical maps use similar terms of reference. A 1934 drawing of Wonsqueak Harbor (Winter Harbor) on Schoodic Peninsula includes four structures each identified as a “fish house” (see Figure 15 page 12). In the legal

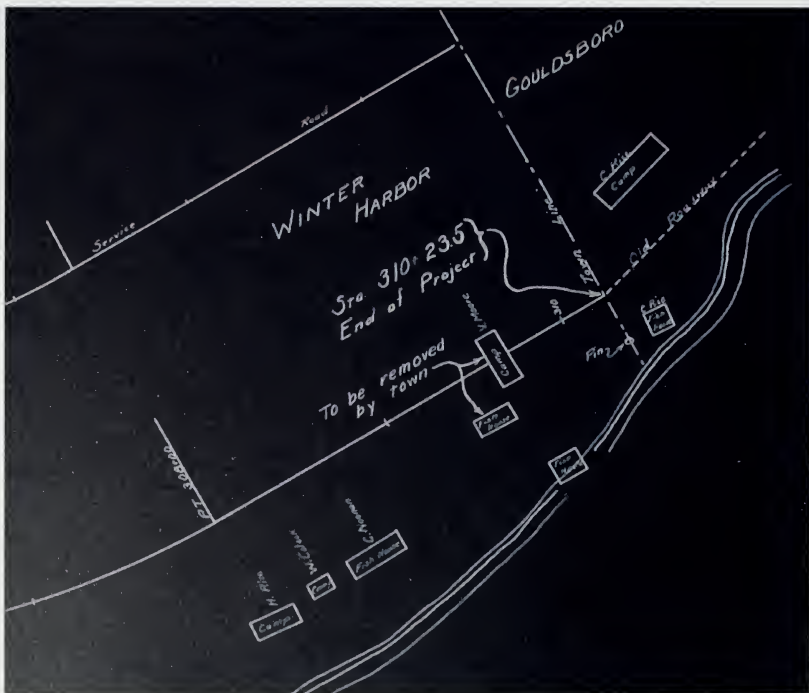


Figure 15: Map showing Fish Houses in Wonsqueak Harbor, Schoodic Peninsula (1934); USDA Bureau of Public Roads, courtesy of Olmsted Center for Landscape Preservation.

descriptions of individual lots in Otter Cove, warranty deeds to fish house lots include the following terms: “fish house,” a “lot which I have occupied for fishing purposes and on which I formerly had fish houses,” the “boat slip,” “the Boat slip at the Fish Stand (so called),” “the Fish houses,” “a fish stand owned by Geo. Graves,” “the boat landing,” “the Southeast corner of the foundation of J. Walls fish house,” “the South East corner of the shed attached to S. J. Walls fish house,”¹ “this being for a fish house stand, and containing twenty two square feet to run back to the ledge,” and in the Conclusion: the “Fish House Lot” and “one fish house and shed.” From these descriptions, it can be seen that fish houses, sheds, boat slips and landings were situated in close proximity, an association that is confirmed by the interviews and historical photographs compiled in this research project.

Collectively, all of these terms represent various uses and functions of fish houses on the Maine coast as a place central to various kinds of fishing and lobstering activities including where lobster and fishing bait was prepared and stored; gear was prepared, maintained and warehoused; fish products were processed and prepared for sale; and small boats were pulled into slips or landed on the beach. Fish houses were situated in any favorable location suitable for fishing pursuits and may be associated with related structures such as flakes, a small dock, or a slip. Figure 16 (page 14) shows several fish houses in Preble Cove on Cranberry Island with an associated fish flake.

Traditional Uses and Cultural Practices

Fish houses were utilitarian structures used for work and related social gatherings. They were integral components of a traditional fishing activity that was at one time a way of life on Mount Desert Island. They were central workplaces and a base for operations, and they were often associated with a slip or, very occasionally, a simple dock, which provided a landing site for small punts. In some places, fish houses were part of the social space of a community pursuing a traditional lifestyle; such was the case in Otter Cove. The traditional uses of fish houses were the following:

¹ This feature was identified frequently in the deeds: “the southeast corner of the shed attached to the fish house formerly of S. J. Walls;” “Commencing at the South East corner of Samuel J. Walls fish house running on the West side of the shore road so called South to James Walls South East corner fish house;” and “Commencing at a cedar stake one foot S.J. Wallses Southeast corner of his shead (sic) which is attached to his fish house.”



Figure 16: Fish Houses, Preble Cove, Cranberry Island (n.d.); photo by Henry L. Rand (Number 5089, The Southwest Harbor Public Library Photographic Collection).

- Serve as a base of operations and a staging area for fishing activities
- Place to prepare bait, bait tub trawls, salt and store bait
- Place to store gear (inside and outside): tub-trawling lines, lobster traps and buoys, bait barrels, tools and miscellany
- Place to repair and construct equipment: build lobster traps, paint buoys, maintain gear
- Gathering place: social space for fishermen

These uses will be briefly described in this chapter. The primary source of information about these topics is a series of interviews with knowledgeable local experts in Otter Creek, Southwest Harbor, Bass Harbor, and Bar Harbor on Mt. Desert Island, and another in Deer Isle. It should be noted that the specific types of fishing they described sometimes varied according to location and the historical period under discussion, and there has been no attempt to systematically present specific fisheries that were prevalent in Otter Cove or in any other locale for any given historical period. Such descriptions would be beyond the scope of the project and inappropriate with the data that is available. On the other hand, the interviews consistently indicated a set or range of

activities that were associated with these structures, which in their totality provide substantive information about how these structures were used by fishermen during the late 19th and early 20th centuries. That is what is described here.

Base of Fishing Operations

Fish houses were a staging area for all types of small-scale fishing commonly practiced along the coast of Maine in the 19th and 20th centuries. Cod fishing has long been an important activity for Maine fishermen, dating from the 17th and 18th centuries. By 1880, lobsters were the second most valuable fishery product caught by fishermen in the Frenchman's Bay district, after cod (Earll 1881). In the early 1900s, fish houses were used for "any kind of fishing," mostly cod that was salted and dried, and other locally important activities such as, herring (Stanley Interview). They were used for lobstering and ground fish (cod, haddock, cusk, hake, halibut, skate), and also for mackerel, herring, menhaden and alewives (Haskell Interview). They were used for lobstering and "tub trawling" for cod, pollack, haddock, and hake (Pettegrew Interview). Sometimes they were associated with seining, a herring weir or clamming activity (Stanley, Pettegrew Interviews). They were used during the day, but also for night fishing (such as for hake, or seining for herring or menhaden by torchlight). They may have been associated with flakes used for drying cod, smoking herring, or a salting operation. Besides the fish house, fishing sites often had a landing area or slip for dragging a small skiff or "punt" onto the shore for loading and unloading fish products, gear and bait, and for transportation to and from a larger fishing vessel that was moored safely offshore.

Most fish houses were smaller structures built directly on dry shore above high tide, and were used by individual fishermen who accessed them on the tide, at mid to high tide. Some fishermen had their fish houses on small docks where they stored their lobster traps in winter; these were located in the more sheltered harbors (Pettegrew, Haskell Interviews). There were a few larger enterprises housed on wharves, such as Stanley Fisheries in Manset, that served multiple fishermen, each with an individual structure on the dock. These larger operations also had flakes where they dried fish and produced barrels of salted fish, when cod was still plentiful (Stanley Interview). Beal's in Southwest Harbor also had flakes for drying codfish: "Even in the [19]40s and '50s, Beal's down here had flakes on the top of their buildings, that they used to dry fish" (Stanley Interview).

Ralph Stanley described a fish house on Baker Island² as a base of operations for the men who lived there:

Down in Bakers Island they had a little fish stand where they kept their gear, and their bait, and they worked on their traps. They had a weir down east of the bar, too. That was the center of operations there, that little fish house. Used to be a weir at Bakers Island bar, where they caught herring. ... All the inhabitants on Bakers Island used that fish house: Stanleys, Gilleys. They were all related — it was a family thing. I think the last I saw of it was in the early 1950s, and it either fell down or was torn down.
(Stanley Interview)

This description is a useful generalization of the central role of fish houses in the fishing operations that were common on Mt. Desert Island in the 19th and early 20th century. While occasionally several men shared the use of a fish house, as in the case on Baker Island, they were more often used individually. The same held true on Deer Isle: “At one time there was almost one for every fisherman” (Haskell Notes).

These structures were the site from which fishermen set out to fish, to collect fish and shellfish used for bait, or gather materials used to make fishing equipment (such as the spruce used for lobster traps or boat timbers). They were the destination at the end of the day, where fishermen would bring their catch for salting and smoking, or store lobsters in wooden boxes or cars until they could be transferred to the buyers. Skiffs would be pulled up to these structures when not in use, and small slips would be constructed on the beach for that purpose. Supplies and equipment which were not kept on the boat were placed in the fish house each evening, and then taken out to the boat on the next morning. Fishermen used fish houses to cut (or shuck) bait and prepare their fishing lines for the next day. The small structures were used to store, repair and construct their equipment, and to keep spare parts and supplies needed for maintaining their operation. Depending on the size and nature of the community, they were also places for socializing and exchanging information with other fishermen while carrying out shared work tasks. Such interactions were an important means of developing, maintaining, transferring and preserving elements of traditional knowledge about fishing, the weather and ecological processes. Since fishing was a year-round occupation, the houses would be used in these ways throughout the year.

² This island is currently identified on official maps as ‘Baker Island’ and so that is the name used in this report. However, it apparently was changed from ‘Bakers Island’ which appears on historic maps and continues to be used by Mount Desert Island residents today.

Preparing and Storing Bait

Because fishermen gathered their own bait, fish houses provided a necessary place of work to prepare and store bait, and to bait their gear. In some cases, that was their primary use, along with safekeeping some gear. Norman Walls describes the use of the fish shacks in Otter Cove during his lifetime:

Most of them were shacks, basically, made to hold [bait]. See, you could get your bait in the summertime but they had no place to keep it in the wintertime so they used to get it and store it in the big barrels in there, salt it down. . . . They were just something that they stored their gear in and their bait in to go lobster fishing. And they used to have to keep it, you know, buy it in the fall of the year to keep it all winter because most of those guys did fish in winters.
(Norman Walls Interview)

Figure 17 (page 17) shows a bait barrel outside of a small fish house formerly located in Norwood Cove.



Figure 17: Fish House with Barrel, Norwood Cove (n.d.); photo by Henry L. Rand (Number 5087, The Southwest Harbor Public Library Photographic Collection).

Curing bait was a special skill of the lobsterman. The small fish (such as herring) used for bait was better if it was strong in odor, and this was especially important during the molting season when lobsters shed their exoskeleton and went into hiding.

My father had two [barrels], and the secret amongst the fishermen was you had to have bait that really was rank. They would make “the Italian fish sauce” — you could smell that stuff for four or five hundred feet. When the shedders started coming in they were all fragile down there and they hide under the rocks because they’re soft as a jellyfish after they shed. So in order to entice them to come out, the fishermen figured you had to have something pretty potent. So they’d make up this bait of herring. I guess some used menhaden or porgies... let that ferment real good, you know, and then you’d bait the traps with that.
(Haskell Interview).

Fishermen expended a significant amount of labor to net small fish (herring and menhaden) and dig shellfish (mussels and clams) which they would then have to prepare before they could use it for bait. Harold Walls (a lifelong fishermen based in Otter Cove from 1920-90) wrote a story about a fish house in Otter Cove, called “The Baiting House,” in which he describes groups of men gathering to bait trawl lines, known to fishermen as tub trawls because the long fishing lines were kept coiled in wooden tubs (see Figure 18 page 19 and Appendix 2). In the fish house, they would shuck mussels and clams or cube herring and bait the hundreds of hooks that comprised each line for the next day’s fishing. “The mussel was the most commonly used bait, especially for winter-time fishing. Many times the floor space would be piled high with crocus sacks full of the blue-hued bivalves, procured from the tidal flats of the Island’s coves” (Walls n.d.:12-13). Sometimes as many as 20 bushels of the shellfish would be gathered and taken to the fish house for shelling over a period of days.

Occasionally, fishermen used a fish house to prepare shellfish for sale to a cannery. Such was the case of a fish house located in Pretty Marsh, which was used by the Butlers (Alfred Butler). “They would steam clams and sell them to the Underwood factory in Bass Harbor. There were so many clam shells there that they thought it was an Indian midden. They would steam them just enough to get the shells to open, shuck them out, snip the heads, and take them to the factory in jars where they would be canned” (Stanley Notes).



Figure 18: The Baiting Shed Fish House, Otter Cove (c. 1960); courtesy of Robert Walls.

Storing, Building and Repairing Equipment

Besides working on fish products, and preparing and storing bait for lobstering and fishing, the fishermen would build, maintain, repair and recondition their equipment, and store their tools needed for doing so, in the fish house. “They would build their traps there, and paint their lobster buoys in there in winter. Build their traps on a pole on a bench” (Pettegrew Interview). Carroll Haskell of Deer Isle provided a description of the trap-building equipment associated with fish houses of sufficient size to accommodate the pole and workbench needed for building traps.

Dad had made an ingenious bow bending tool out of a 1928 Chevrolet disc wheel. He shaved away at a red spruce bough and bent it around the Chevy wheel a little at each try until the roughly shaved away bough and its rounded ends would protrude through one inch diameter holes bored into each end of a single red spruce spreader. The finished bows results in evenly sided traps when assembled with spruce laths. The bows were slid over a horizontal pole which was marked with a slash of paint to indicate the correct position for each bow assembly. The ‘work bench pole’ was supported on the outer end with a forked branch or a drift wood board which in turn was held in place by poking the support through a hole in

the floor. The longer spruce bed pieces were nailed to the bottoms of the bow pieces to make a rectangular frame. Spruce laths were nailed lengthwise onto the bottoms of the bow spreaders in the sequential step of making a wooden lobster trap. Each lath was spaced an equal distance from the previously nailed lath. A simple wooden homemade gauge served to assure equal spacing. The finished trap had a space for a wooden framed door that was hinged with two little strips cut out of an old automobile tire's sidewall. The hinges were hard to make but lasted for the life of the trap.

(Haskell Notes)

While some of the procedures described here may be from the 20th century, the basic pole and workbench arrangement necessary for bending spruce bows to the shape of a lobster trap would have been unchanged from the previous century. Pettegrew described the typical fish house as being large enough for a wood stove and the trap pole, so they could build traps through the winter. In Otter Cove, not all fishermen had fish houses of sufficient size to accommodate the trap pole, and they built their traps at home during the winter months.

Haskell described other items that might be found in a typical fish house that he observed when he was a boy (approximately 1940), which included a couple of water tight barrels used to hold fermenting lobster bait; coils of lobster pot warp hanging from wooden pegs driven into a beam; an assortment of tools; a tub or two of fish trawls coiled down with the hooks removed from the gangions to prevent rust from destroying the lines; and perhaps a set of nail keg floats prepared with a slender spruce sapling protruding from the ends (to hold a flag) and a stone fastened to the other end to keep it upright in the water, to be used for the long lines. The point we are making here is not to provide an exact description of the interior of a typical fish house in Otter Cove, but to indicate the kind of gear that fishermen regularly made, used and stored in their fish houses in the first half of the 20th century, which would likely have been characteristic of fish houses on Mt. Desert Island in the 1870s and 1880s. This description indicates the kind of working space that was most likely typical of fish houses in that time period.

Some of the work associated with fish houses took place outside in the immediate vicinity of the structure. For example, in the early 20th century before the introduction of nylon lines and other materials that are more impervious to the effects of the sea and weather, it was necessary to treat ropes and twines made from manila and sisal with tar to

provide protection and make them last longer. Harold Walls observed that rocks on the west side of Otter Cove were blackened from the application of tar to fishing lines, which was commonly done by men fishing from that side of the Cove in the early years of the century (Robert Walls, Personal Communication). An historical photograph from the late 19th century also provides an indication of the grounds surrounding a large fish house on Otter Cove, which is not neat and tidy and clearly has the appearance of a work site commensurate with the activity centered there (see Figure 19 page 21).

A Social Space for Fishermen

A fish house was a work place for a fisherman — “he’d go out there and he’d work; nobody would bother him much” (Haskell Interview). Often this was solitary activity in the small fish houses scattered around the coast. Fish houses were generally not places in which women and children would be found. In the afternoon after fishing, it would be a place where a fisherman could work on his gear, and prepare his bait for the following day. If there were more than one person fishing from a location, the fish house would serve as place where several men would “gather in the afternoon and pass the time of day, and whittle shavings” (Stanley Interview, describing the fish house on Baker Island). It was a place where fishermen would work together on similar tasks, indoors or out of doors.



Figure 19: Fish House, West Side of Otter Cove (n.d.); courtesy of Robert Walls.

In a brief story entitled “The Baiting House,” Harold Walls describes a fish house in Otter Creek that in former times had been a home to fishing families, but in the early and mid-20th century had become a place where groups of fishermen would prepare bait and apply it to their lines. They would be found there particularly when snow or wind prevented the fishermen from venturing out. He recounts “the ribald oaths and obscene raillery” that characterized the interaction among the “mussel shellers” working there. From his own memories of the men, augmented with remembered stories and printed narratives he had collected, he paints an image of the old Otter Cove characters joking, fooling, recounting stories, and remonstrating among themselves. He describes Bill Carter, Willis Walls, Walter Stanley, George and Martin Davis, and Ansel Davis, who were some among those who might be found at any one time baiting their hooks in the fish house during the early 20th century. The complete story is presented in Appendix 2.

In Southwest Harbor and Manset, there were two larger businesses that rented out fish houses to individual fishermen (Beal’s and Stanley Fisheries). The fish houses were located on large commercial wharves. The social use of this space was similar to that described in the previous paragraph, especially during the winter months.

...Stanley Fisheries had two huge docks there and they rented space to individual fishermen. So there was thirty fish houses on that one dock that belonged to different people, and – but they all were basically the same, you know. They had the wood stove and the trap pole on the bench and in the wintertime, that was like a little city there, you know. Everybody was down there building traps and drinking coffee.
(Pettegrew Interview)

This social pattern resembles that portrayed in a fictional community fish house in the novel entitled, *The Weir*, by Ruth Moore, who lived on an island outside of Bass Harbor. The house was a series of eight rooms connected one to the other in a line, a one-storied structure eight rooms long. “It was owned by the men of six or eight different families, its gear cluttered rooms passed along through the years from father to son. ...The men built lobster traps there and painted buoys and baited trawl and stored bait and gear; but more than anything, they gathered there for talk” (Moore 1986:18-19).

Structures

A fish house could be anything from a small shack on the shore to a big warehouse on a wharf. In this report, the focus is on the smaller structures such as were in use in Otter Cove. In the coastal Maine area including Mt. Desert, a fish house or stand was usually “just a little shack on the shore where they kept their gear. Sometimes they had fish flakes there — it all depends on how much fishing they did” (Stanley). They were built on shore adjacent to the beach where boats could approach at high tide. Often fish houses were accompanied by a modification of the shoreline.

The structures were usually built out of drift wood and scavenged materials, at minimal cost; the principal investment was one of labor.

The real early ones were built out of a lot of drift wood, used lumber, very little new lumber in the construction. It was old windows off the dump, and if somebody tore an old barn down or something, they scavenged the lumber. You know, they didn’t put any cash in them. It was just labor. (Pettegrew Interview)



Figure 20: Fish House with Lobster Trap, Norwood Cove (n.d.); photo by Henry L. Rand (Number 5484, The Southwest Harbor Public Library Photographic Collection).

One fish stand on Deer Isle was built completely out of wood salvaged from a ship that wrecked near the island (Haskell). Historical photographs of fish houses in Otter Cove show that they were constructed out of rough planks and boards, and one was shingled. Similar materials were used for others that were positioned on Mount Desert Island and the surrounding islands (for example, see Figure 20).

As can be seen in the historical photograph of fish houses in Otter Cove dated

1900-1920 (Figure 21), they were constructed in various sizes. The smallest may be 8 feet by 8 feet, just large enough to hold a couple of bait barrels and some gear (Haskell Interview). The smallest might have a flat roof, while larger ones usually had a gabled roof. Larger ones, those that were more effective working spaces, would be large enough to hold the trap pole and workbench, and a wood stove. “Most of them were average probably 12 feet by 12, maybe. Big enough to get a trap pole in it because they had to build their traps on a pole on a bench and so it had to be wide enough to get a trap pole in it and a wood stove, ...” (Pettegrew Interview). The most elaborate may have a second story, with a footprint about 13 feet by 14. Such a structure was located on the east side of Otter Cove, and in its early days served as a home as well as a working site for families who fished there at one time (see Figure 18 page 19). It had a small window on the second story in the gable end. Another two-story fish house was situated on the opposite shore of the cove, probably in the 19th century, and there was one on Cranberry Island (see Figures 19 and 16, respectively, pages 21 and 14).

Boat Landings, Slips and Docks

Fish houses were usually associated with a small boat landing or slip so that fishermen could pull their punt or pea pod into shore and to rest it on the beach when not



Figure 21: Fish Houses, Otter Cove (1900-1920); photo by Virgil Dorr (in Hansen 1989), image courtesy of Northeast Harbor Library.

in use. These were constructed and maintained by manually clearing larger rocks away to get down to sand and gravel, which provided a smoother surface for landing their boat. The slips had to be regularly maintained, especially in spring after winter storms rolled the rocks back in. They had to do this every year.

Ralph Stanley described the landing that was maintained at the fish house formerly located on Baker Island, located at the spot where boats land today:

the fellows that lived there, they used to keep the rocks cleared away from there, so you had a little beach there to land on. Nobody now clears the rocks away, you see, so it's kind of rocky about the landing there, but years ago they used to go down there and tie down and lug those rocks out of the way. But [waves] in the winter would wash them right back, you know. It was a never-ending process but they kept those rocks cleared away from there so they could land easier. It was just a little narrow place in the rocks there where they could land a boat. . . . even low tide they could land there, you know, get out and drag your boat up a beach. But they used to keep those rocks cleared out of there so they'd have a good chance.
(Stanley Interview)

On the east side of Otter Cove, Harold Walls and Mike Bracy maintained small slips into which they were able to draw their punts. It is likely that the other fishermen who had fish houses there did so as well. They attached running lines to posts embedded into the rocky shore, and these lines were looped through rings on large rocks placed offshore so they could pull their punts out back out into deeper water after they had landed and unloaded their gear, or when they were ready to go out to their boats moored further offshore in the morning (see Figure 7 page 4). Harold Walls wrote a poem entitled "Picking the Slip" that memorializes these activities (see Appendix 2, which includes an image of his slip). The outline of his slip and the wooden post may be seen today at this location (see Figure 8 page 4).

In the more sheltered locations, fishermen sometimes built small docks on which they stored their lobster traps in the winter months when they did not fish lobster. This feature is described by Mr. Pettegrew, speaking about Clark Point Road in Southwest Harbor where a number of fishermen had docks:

. . . lots of fishermen had their own little dock with a fish house on it. And a lot of the docks over the period of time grew so they could pile their traps on them in the wintertime because very few people fish lobster in the

winter. And so they kept their traps on the docks which helped keep the ice from taking them out, because they were inexpensively built out of spruce piling and they didn't set them into the beach very deep, you know. They didn't drive them with pile drivers and all that stuff. They would go down and dig with a shovel at low water and get them in as deep as they could, and then they cribblock them and everything. But of course, ... this harbor used to freeze solid in the winter and the ice would pick the docks up. So they used to store all their fishing gear on the docks in the wintertime to hold them down and make them heavier.
(Pettegrew Interview)

These docks did not have the advantages of modern, pile-driven wharves, nor did they have floats. Their use was dependent on the tides and some were not accessible at low tide. "It depended on what part of the shore you were on, how far your dock had to go out so you had water at low water, and some of them didn't" (Pettegrew Interview). But having a dock was also a factor of whether the fishermen had access to shore property, which was not typical. "Just some had docks, the ones that had shore access. There were more that didn't than did" (Pettegrew Interview).

A small dock and a boat slip located on the west side of Otter Cove are identified in historic maps and deeds. They also appear on the 1887 Colby and Stuart map of Mount Desert Island (see Figure 22 page 27). On this map, the slip is situated on the inner side of a small wharf. This feature is similar to images that appear in later legal drawings of the Fish House Lot. The documentation suggests that this slip and its associated dock were maintained over several decades at least. Since the Cove was not well protected from high seas during storms and winter weather, a small dock would be subject to wave action and, like slips, required regular maintenance. Larger, more permanent structures (such as piers) were never found in Otter Cove due to its exposure to the sea.

Customary Use and Land Ownership

Fish houses were positioned on the shore above high tide on a site convenient for work and in proximity to fishing grounds. Small fish houses were generally owned and used by one fisherman and his family, and occasionally they were used by a couple of related families (such as on Baker Island). However, the land on which they were constructed may or may not have been owned by the fisherman. In the 19th and early

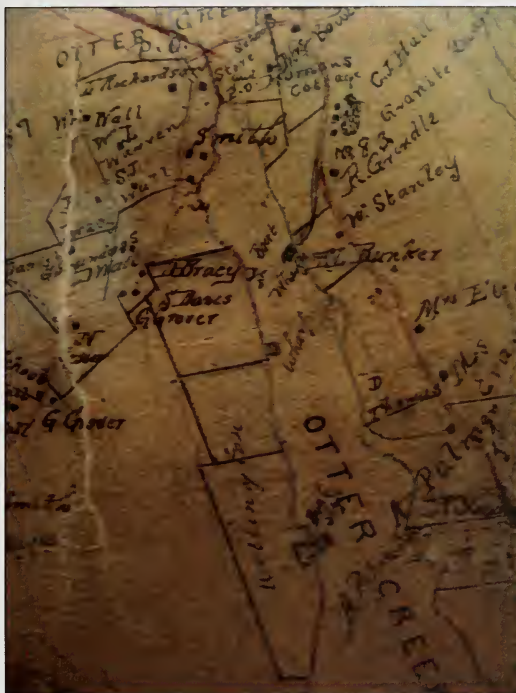


Figure 22: Map of Otter Cove (1887), detail from map of Mt. Desert Island by Colby and Stuart (the original map is on display at the Northeast Harbor Library).

20th centuries, land along the shore was not as highly valued and restricted as it is today, and landowners were less concerned about its use by fishermen. If a site was suitable for working (fishing), coastal land was generally viewed as available for use. Knowledgeable people interviewed for this study indicated that fish house owners may have owned the land on which they erected fish houses, or they may have set up on land with permission of the owner. However, no one suggested that land ownership was acquired or conveyed by customary use of the fish shack that was put on it

Ownership of the land on which a fish house stood was not necessary for the fishing operation, and the ownership of land under a fish house was not a significant issue at the time they were prevalent.

...they might own the land or [it] might be somebody's land that everybody used. People weren't fussy about land like they are today, you know, about trespassing and all that." ... most generally I think they owned the land. But the person who set it up owned the land or somebody owned the land just let them set it up there. ... They might have some agreement with the owner of the land but oftentimes it was a relative. (Stanley Interview)

Another person commented, "...there was always, you know, the gray zone where nobody quite knew who owned the shore property but nobody cared" (Pettegrew Interview). Attitudes towards using the land along the shore differed from those of the contemporary period. "When I was a kid around there [1930s], you could go anywhere you wanted. Nobody would holler at you. Not anymore" (Haskell Interview). One way some people gained access to shore property was through their employment as caretakers for summer estates. "A lot of these guys were caretakers for summer estates, and so they could kind of get a little bit of shore frontage that way. They never owned it, I don't think" (Pettegrew Interview).³

In Otter Cove, there were multiple fish houses located on the eastern shore. Some of these were identified in early land deeds for that area, but there were at least as many which were not notated in the land records examined for this study. Figure 20 (page 22) shows six fish houses arrayed along the shore in a photograph that is dated 1900-1920. Given the evidence for long term use of this area, it is likely that the locale was viewed as a common area open for use by those who carried out fishing pursuits. This perception was also shared by others. Otter Creekers related that when John D. Rockefeller, Jr., was acquiring that land during the 1930s, he promised the fisher folk that their access would never be restricted, and he had the motorway from the Otter Cliffs road down to the cove built for that purpose. More recently, it was the practice of the town of Bar Harbor to employ their heavy equipment to remove the large boulders occasionally tossed up on the beach by storm surges, so that the fishermen had clear access to their boats (Robert Walls Interview).

However, there is no evidence that rights to the land on which a fish house stood accumulated or that land ownership might eventually be transferred to the fisherman using the site, or to his offspring, as a result of long term use. The same system of rights

³ It was not clear which part of Mount Desert Island was being talked about here.

held for use of fish houses built on wharves in a harbor. For example, one of the elder Beals would let fishermen “use” his wharf in Southwest Harbor, and the lobsterman would make a fish house there and keep using it for his lifetime (Beal: Personal Communication). There was no permanence to the arrangement, nor would the fisherman be able to transfer it to anyone else.

In another case which was documented for this study, a Bass Harbor lobsterman described that he has been using a large workshop and a wharf for about 60 years with the permission of the landowners, without owning the land, in return for selling his lobsters to them (see Figures 23-24 pages 29 and 30). The current use of the workshop and wharf has been passed down for three generations in the owning family, to this lobsterman and his sons and grandson. He started lobster fishing for them when he was graduated from high school, and at that time there were five men sharing the workshop. Over the years, as the other men died or started fishing for someone else, the owner would not invite anyone else to use the shop as long as this fisherman continued to use it. He has two sons that are fishing, and they have maintained the wharf together and continue to have exclusive use, without paying taxes. He now has a grandson who lobsters, making a total of five generations that have fished and lobstered, and three that have been using the



Figure 23: Large Fish House on Wharf, Bass Harbor (2006); photo by C. Smythe.



Figure 24: Wharf Used for Lobster Fishing, Bass Harbor (2006); photo by C. Smythe.

wharf (the grandson does not currently use this wharf). However, it is understood by all parties that this is a right granted by the landowner to the lobsterman and his family, and that the lobstermen do not own the property (Thurlow Interview).⁴

Locations

Fish houses were ubiquitous along the coast of Maine and were sited wherever it was convenient to fish, that is, where there was some shelter and good access to fishing grounds. They were an integral part of a way of life throughout the maritime region of Maine and the Gulf of St. Lawrence. On Mount Desert Island, fish houses were used since the 1700s, probably starting with the first European settlers. They were erected at many locations on Mount Desert Island and the surrounding islands. “Everybody had them. And a lot of them were built right on the beach.”

⁴ During the writing of this report, the owner died and his son inherited the property. According to the interviewee, the recently deceased owner had promised that the wharf would be offered for sale to the fisherman if it was going to be sold outside the family. However, in early 2008 the current owner put the wharf up for sale and asked the fishermen to leave the premises. Eventually, the lobster fishermen succeeded in purchasing the tiny parcel of land (and the rights to the wharf) from the current owner.

Wherever a fishermen set up, you know, he'd have a little fish stand. . . . They were everywhere. . . . Anywhere where they could catch a fish and set up a little place at the waterfront. . . . Anybody that was fishing they had to have a base for their operations. So you know, they set up wherever they could.
(Stanley Interview).

While viewing an historical photograph of a small fish house formerly situated in Norwood Cove, another local expert noted, "A lot of them were built right on the edge of the beach, with no dock involved" (Pettegrew Interview). Similar statements were made about fish houses on Deer Isle. "Some in Stonington were just perched on ledges stuck out over water. . . . In a tidal basin there, there was enough water on low water so you could have a shallow draft lobster boat in there" (Haskell Interview).



Figure 25: Fish House, Stonington (2007); photo by C. Smythe.



Figure 26: Fish House, Stonington (2007); photo by C. Smythe.

Fish houses were in use at the following locations in and around Mount Desert Island:

Great Cranberry Island
Little Cranberry Island
Baker Island
Bartlett Island
Folly Island
Bar Harbor
Otter Creek
Seal Harbor
Northeast Harbor
Fernald's Cove
Norwood's Cove
Southwest Harbor
Manset
Seawall
Bass Harbor
Pretty Marsh

Ralph Stanley, who was familiar with the majority of these locations, often provided brief descriptions of the fishing that accompanied the houses at these sites (Stanley Interview, unless otherwise noted):

Fish Stand: Down at [Great] Cranberry Island my great-grandfather had, in the Pool, a dock where they cured their own fish and their fish was in great demand in Boston from the [fish] market, for the quality of it. It was all codfish.

Down at Bakers Island they had a little fish stand where they kept their gear and their bait and they worked on their traps and things like that. They had a weir down east of the bar too, and that was their center of operations out of that little fish house. East of Bakers Island bar, there was a weir there, and of course they caught herring.

Back in the, around 1800, I think the Whitmores had land down to Seawall and they had a fish stand right there where they landed their boats on the beach and a little place there where they landed their boats and hauled their boats up and they probably had a fish stand right there.

At Little Cranberry Island too, there was a big fish stand there. Wherever a fishermen set up, you know, he'd have a little fish stand, probably a number of them on Cranberry Island.

And at Otter Creek, there's probably a number of them there.

Seal Harbor I bet had fish stands ...

and Northeast [Harbor] also.

And here in Southwest there's probably ...

Probably up at Norwood Cove there was fish stands.

Up at Fernald Cove there was a wharf there one time, on the Fernald's land. ... they probably had a fish stand there, as well as just a wharf, for their own use.

There was a fish stand over on Folly Island years ago, in Bartlett Narrows.

Probably the Bartletts had fish stands on Bartlett Island too. They were everywhere.

On Sutton Island, John Gilley had a smokehouse there. It tells about it in that book that Charles Elliot wrote about John Gilley.

I can remember the one down at Bakers Island. I don't think they had a smokehouse there, but there was just a shack, but they kept their gear and their bait and that sort of thing. They used to gather there in the afternoon and pass the time of day and whittle shavings and just enjoy themselves, you know.

Bar Harbor had fish houses too, fish shacks. Years ago, yep. Anywhere where they could catch a fish and set up a little place at the waterfront.

[there were some in Bass Harbor too?] Yeah. They even had a place where they tried out whale oil there. They'd go out and catch a whale and tow it in or something and cut it up there on the beach and try out the oil there.

The shack at Norwood Cove might have been used to boil clams. I can remember when the Underwood Factory in Bass Harbor canned clams. People dug clams, boiled them on wash boilers over a fire on the shore, shucked them in the shack to take the meat to the factory (Stanley Notes).

The Butlers also dug clams and boiled them at Pretty Marsh, in a little shack there. They would shuck them and sell them to the Underwood Factory (Stanley Notes).

Fish houses were similarly located in neighboring places such as Wonsqueak Harbor on Schoodic Peninsula and on Deer Isle. Similar information is reported along the coast of Maine and in Canada. "Every little town on the coast, you'd see several fish docks. When I was a kid there was tons of them in Jonesport, Sawyer's Cove and them places" (Pettegrew Interview). On Deer Island, a local expert was able to take the researcher to view nine sites at which fish houses were once located. Structures were present at seven of them, although only three remain in use as fish houses (in the modern setting, they are on docks with pilings; see Figures 25 and 26 pages 31 and 32). In Newfoundland, an expert on these structures reports, "There are thousands of them still around today," although many are no longer in use (Pocius Notes).⁵

⁵For an ethnographic description of a fishing community that once made heavy use of fish stages, see *A Place to Belong* by Gerald L. Pocius (2000).

CHAPTER 3. FISHING AND FISH HOUSES IN OTTER COVE IN THE 1870s

In this part of the report, information about fishing activity and the use of fish houses in Otter Cove during the decade between 1870 and 1880 is summarized. The information is derived from a variety of archival sources including census data, deeds and land records, historic maps and photographs, written histories, newspaper articles, and published fishery reports.

Information about the species and relative intensity (species concentration) of fishing effort in Otter Creek is available from a report on the productivity of Maine marine fisheries associated with the federal census of 1880 (Earl 1881, Census Bulletin No. 278). This report presents information for state customs districts. Otter Creek, like other communities on Mount Desert Island, was enumerated within the Frenchman's Bay district. The following table indicates the intensity of effort for each of the reported species that was likely fished in Otter Cove in 1880.

AMOUNT AND VALUE OF CATCH IN FRENCHMAN'S BAY, 1880

<u>Products</u>	<u>Pounds Fresh</u>	<u>Value as Sold</u>
Cod	65,341,225	\$70,368
Hake	1,642,950	\$9,127
Haddock	1,512,000	\$10,800
Pollock	210,250	1,450
Cusk	101,400	\$1,073
Mackerel	1,023,025	\$25,307
Herring	1,433,391	\$21,211
Lobsters	1,637,726	\$56,450
Clams	151,530	\$16,565
<u>TOTAL</u>	<u>73,053,497</u>	<u>\$212,351</u>

Note: Miscellaneous products are not included in this table, which explains why the totals are slightly higher than the sum of the figures in each column.
(Source: Earl 1881: 23)

Otter Cove fishermen concentrated on bottom fish (cod, hake, haddock, pollack and cusk) and lobster. According to this information, these resources provided nearly 100% of fishing income to Otter Creekers in 1880. Cod was the most plentiful and valuable species, followed by lobster. If we use the aggregate data for Frenchman's Bay, we can see that cod and lobster alone provided sixty percent of a fisherman's livelihood in 1880. This conclusion is similar to the information provided in oral history interviews about Otter Cove during the early 20th century. At that time, herring and clams were fished for bait but not sold as fish products. We conclude that in 1880, bottom fishing and lobstering provided the cash income to Otter Cove fishermen. It is interesting that this pattern of fishing is largely unchanged from the practices described for the first half of the 20th century (see Walls n.d.).

Census rolls for the years 1870 and 1880 enumerate the occupation of household residents and provide a means to identify the number of people who were fishing in Otter Cove during the 1870s. Fishing was the largest single occupation at this time, and the number of individuals who listed fishing as their occupation grew from 27 in 1870 to 33 in 1880 (see table below). Because the census did not identify the residents of Otter Creek village separately from other households within the town of Mt. Desert, the Otter Creek individuals were identified by comparing the family names of fishermen in the 1800s with names of their descendants who are known to have fished in Otter Cove the early and mid-20th century. These names were Bracy, Davis, Dodge, Richardson and Walls. These families are clustered together near the end of the census roll, suggesting that the community of Otter Creek was enumerated as a unit at the end of the census roll. This inference is also indicated by the small number of fishermen appearing elsewhere on the list for Mt. Desert town.

**FISHERMEN IN OTTER CREEK, TOWN OF MT. DESERT,
IN 1870 AND 1880**

	<u>1870</u>	<u>1880</u>
Number of Fishermen	27	33
Number of Households with Fishermen	24	26

(Source: U.S. Census)

In 1870, the occupation of Otter Creek fishermen was identified as “Cod Fishing,” while in 1880 it was listed as “Fisherman.” These figures underestimate the actual number of people fishing in Otter Cove because it only includes the inhabitants of the village of Otter Creek, which is situated on the western side of the cove and lies within the boundary of Mt. Desert Town. There were additional families living on the eastern side of the cove, situated in the town of Eden (later re-named Bar Harbor), which are not included in these figures. Indeed, the Eden settlement was large enough to have its own separate school in 1880. A list of the Otter Creek (Mt. Desert Town) households with fishermen in these years is provided in Appendices 5 and 6.

It is interesting to review information from 1910, because by this year the number of fishermen residing in Otter Creek had declined significantly. There were 10 men listed as “Lobster Fisherman” at this time. This change can be explained by the increase of newer employment opportunities on estates and in support of the summer rusticators who were present in the Bar Harbor area in large numbers by this time. Otter Creekers filled occupations such as carpenter, clerk, estate cook, dressmaker, livery driver, estate gardener, estate housekeeper, laborer, laundress, house painter, family servant, stone cutter, and teamster (street work) — positions which were largely unavailable in 1880. As before, the number of fishermen reported here does not incorporate the households on the Bar Harbor side of the cove, which most likely included additional fishermen.

Changes to the traditional way of life in Otter Creek due to the onset of rusticators were already in evidence by 1881. The following excerpts from an article in the Mt. Desert Herald, under the heading of Otter Creek, on July 24, 1881, is descriptive of the trend starting to affect the village:

Otter Creek, situated partly in Mount Desert, was so named from having been formerly a great place for otters, an aged resident mentioning having seen five, one morning in “The Long Ago,” disporting near his home.

There are some pretty, new dwelling houses, and two good schoolhouses, one on the “Eden side,” being a nice, new, commodious building, with modern improvements we were told, affording a good chance for Sabbath schools, religious meetings, etc., which are well attended. The prevalent spirit of improvement has extended to Otter Creek, and the inhabitants generally are endeavoring to do something in the way of building, or at least fixing up their houses, etc. Good teams are kept, and the proprietors go in to Bar Harbor early every morning through

the season, with supplies of milk, etc., for the hotels and cottages, which are sold at city prices. Bar Harbor furnishes employment and a market for all the country around. Milk, butter, eggs, poultry, fish, etc., in surprising quantities, are sent in from Otter Creek. Mr. David Bracy, one of the oldest inhabitants, is well and favorably known as a dealer in poultry, fish, etc., buying up large supplies from distant localities, as well as from his own, which he carries into Bar Harbor.

Artists are fond of resorting to Otter Creek for sketching purposes; as splendid opportunities are afforded. Thunder Cove and Otter Cliffs are noted places of resort. The terminus of the carriage road is at the place of “Old Master Young,” a deserving patriarch of, we will not venture to say, how many winters.

(*Mt. Desert Herald*, July 24, 1881)

The writer explains to prospective summer visitors that a daughter of Mr. Young is “just the one to call upon in order to get posted in regard to the beauties, advantages and special points of interest at Otter Creek. . . .” Even at this early date, some people have “importuned upon the lady and her husband to sell their place.” Thus, in Otter Creek, the influence of rusticators is clearly in evidence by 1881.

Fish Houses in Otter Cove in the 1870s

A partial record of the use of fish houses in Otter Creek in the 1870s is provided in deeds for lots on either side of the cove. All of these notes were gleaned from land files in the archives of the park (Notes on Park Files: Summary of Deeds). However, the level of effort needed to define locations of deeded lots and identify the fish houses thereon was beyond the scope of the research, and was not attempted.

Western (Otter Creek) Side of the Cove

Descriptions of fish houses appear in deeds relating to the “Fish House Lots” located in the outer cove (outside of the modern causeway) on the Otter Creek side. The Fish House Lot includes deeds for five lots comprising the full area known by that designation. In the file for these lots is a record of the earliest legal reference to fish houses in Otter Cove. The deed is dated Nov. 9, 1861 (Samuel Davis to Samuel P. Davis), and describes the land as “the lot of land on which he [Samuel Davis] now lives, on the westerly side of James Walls land, together with fish house and shed on the shore nearby. 23 acres.” This researcher could not identify which of the five Fish House lots was referenced in this deed.

A deed dated Jan. 4, 1869, for Lot 1 references “the boat slip at the fish stand,” “the west side of the road between the fish houses,” and “the old wood landing.” All of these are features connected with fish houses. A deed in the file for this parcel dated April 18, 1873 (James Walls, Jr., to William H. Walls), describes it as including “a lot owned by Samuel Davis containing five acres more or less and a fish stand owned by George Graves.” In another file there was a summary of what is apparently the same deed, which refers to “one half of interest in 40 acres near Otter Creek” and references land owned by David Bracy, Jr., Samuel Davis, Julius Smith, Elcy Graves, Samuel P. Davis, “and a boat slip at the fish stand, fish houses southerly, and a fish house owned by George Graves.”

Deeds for Lot 2 commencing in Oct. 7, 1886, contain references to a “boat landing,” as well as to “the southeast corner of foundation of S. J. Walls fish house.” The same corner of this fish house is also used to demarcate Lots 4 and 5 within the Fish House Lot, in deeds dating from 1881. Lot 5 is further described as located at the head of the boat slip, “this being for a fish house stand, containing 22 square feet to run back to the Ledge,” in a deed dated June 14, 1873.

These records describe the presence of multiple fish houses on this side of Otter Cove. There was one structure (mentioned as a ‘fish stand’ or a ‘fish house stand’) located next to a boat slip, with additional fish houses situated seaward of the slip. There was also a wooden boat landing, which may have been associated with the slip, indicating that the fishermen built a structure out of timber to aid them in loading and unloading their punts. The multiplicity of fish houses is indicated by the description of a fish house owned by George Graves, and the “fish houses southerly” of the boat slip and fish stand associated with the small dock.

An historical photograph of this location provides an image of a dock-like structure made of logs and filled with rocks (see Figure 28 page 40). The term “cribbed,” used in reference to a wooden framework used in the construction of docks prior to pile-drive posts, may refer to this type of structure. This may have been the “the old wood landing” described in the deeds. The logs are positioned as they would be for the walls of a log house, meeting at right angles in the corners, and the interior is apparently filled with rocks. There are five individuals standing on this structure, which protrudes out into the water. Seaweed growing on the logs suggests that it had some stability to withstand tidal action through the seasons (no doubt with regular maintenance). The stability of



Figure 27: Dock or Boat Landing in Otter Cove (n.d.); courtesy of Robert Walls.

this dock-like structure would have been aided by the practice of dumping rocks on the bar which extends most of the way across the entrance to the cove, located seaward of this view, and which would serve as a primitive breakwater for this structure (this practice is described in Norman Walls Interview).

This log structure would make a serviceable boat landing and provide a stable place to tie up a punt during loading and unloading. Three punts are visible in the photo, anchored a short distance off the end of the “boat landing.” Located behind the people at the end of the landing is a fish flake, a wooden structure with a low roof that housed drying racks. This photo may be the “fish stand” noted in the deeds. The log landing is likely the small wharf-like structure that was drawn by Colby and Stuart in their 1887 map of Mount Desert Island, which depicts a small dock on the west side of Otter Cove at about this location in the outer cove (see Figure 22). If this drawing can be connected with later renderings of the fish house lot, it is possible that the boat slip lay just to the north, on the inside, of this structure.

Another historical photograph provides an image of a fairly large, two-story fish house that was probably located to the south of the boat landing described above (using the background of the eastern side of the cove as a reference point). The fish house,

constructed of rough hewn wooden planks, has a wooden door facing up the cove and away from the weather coming off the sea, with another small door above it indicating a second level (see Figure 19). Four men are positioned to the north of the shack, in the midst of a tangle of wooden lobster traps and construction materials. As noted previously, this photograph is a good illustration of the utilitarian characteristics of fish houses which provide an outdoor work area and storage facility for individual or communal use.

For the purposes of this report, these photographs are presumed to portray the cove in the 1880s or 1890s, and to be illustrative of what was likely to be found in the cove in the 1870s. This is based mainly on the appearance and clothing of the persons appearing in the images, and the general “look” of the photograph. These images were recorded on slides, rather than photos, which may also indicate an earlier date. In any case, a more detailed examination, such as determining when the houses located across the cove were constructed, may provide more reliable information with which to identify the time period.

Eastern (Bar Harbor) Side of the Cove

The earliest record of a fish house on the Bar Harbor (Eden) side in Otter Creek obtained in park files is dated Nov. 16, 1868, in a deed from Lewis H. Bracy to David Bracy. The use of fish houses on this lot was confirmed in a deed from David Bracy to Cyrus Hall dated Feb. 14, 1887, “being the same lot which I have occupied for fishing purposes and on which I formerly had fish houses...” This lot was eventually transferred to Chester Walls in 1920. Chester Walls was reported in interviews (Norman Walls) as one of the owners of fish houses on the Bar Harbor side in the 1950s; he used the small two-story structure that had little triangle windows. This one appears in numerous photographs of Otter Creek and is memorialized in the story by Harold Walls entitled, “The Baiting House,” described above and printed in Appendix 2. Harold Walls believed this house was built in the early 1800s, and that it had been home to several fishing families before the fishermen of his generation used it as a baiting shed. He briefly describes the 19th century phase of the life of this structure in his story:

Over the years it had been the birth-place and home of several successive families of fisher-folk. Young men had brought their brides to this humble abode. The men had followed in footsteps of men of the sea, gone before, sailing their Friendship sloops and straining at the oars of

their dories. The women had helped to salt the great brown-specked cod and the blue-sheened pollack. They had baited the trawl-lines, scrubbed the rough pine floors, cooked the simple fare of the day, and borne babies. The children had romped throughout the long days of summer, making sand tracks that would, with the flooding tide, be washed into oblivion...the eventual destiny of all man's markings. Time passed. The men, now grown old and bent, and the women, broken from their toil, had, in their turn, gone to the little, scattered, now obscure burial plots. Now, the first chapter in the long history of the building has drawn to its completion, its ending.
(Harold Walls: n.d.)

This is one of six fish houses on the Bar Harbor side that appear in an historical photograph published with an article on the history of Otter Creek (see Figure 20, from Richardson 1989:121). The image was contributed by Virgil Dorr, a local fisherman, and is labeled "Otter Creek Fish Houses 1900-1920." None of these structures look like new, and it is presumed that at least some of them were there previously. The intensity of use on the Bar Harbor side as demonstrated in this photograph likely extended back for several decades in the 19th century.

In the 1870s, there were about 30 fishermen in Otter Creek, and there was a small satellite community with more fishermen on the Bar Harbor side, in the immediate vicinity of the fish houses, which had its own school by 1881. Norman Walls identified the owners of fish shacks who were fishing from this location in the 1950s: Richardson, Chester Walls, Harold Walls and Kenneth Tripp, Shirley Bracy, Mike Bracy, and Ansel Davis. These fishermen were from the families with the longest fishing history in the community: Bracy, Davis and Walls. In 1870, there were five Bracy households, five Davis households, and six Walls households who were fishing out of Otter Creek (this not counting any others who lived on the Bar Harbor side). The land is much flatter and more suitable for the siting of fish houses on this side of the cove, and it is probable that there were multiple families fishing from this side in the 1870s.

Other historical photographs show fish houses on this side of Otter Cove in the 1880s. The image of the schooner at Hall's granite quarry in Otter Creek, dated 1880, shows a two story house with a small shack close to the shoreline in this part of the cove (see Figure 29 page 43). Another small fish house on this side of the cove is visible in the image of the boat landing on the opposite shore, described above (Figure 19).



Figure 28: Otter Cove in 1880, Showing Schooner at Hall's Quarry and Fish Houses in Foreground; photo by Raymond Stroud (in Hansen 1989), image courtesy of Northeast Harbor Library.

APPENDIX 1

LIST OF INTERVIEWEES

Norman Walls, Otter Creek
Paul Richardson, Otter Creek
Kendall Davis, Otter Creek
Ralph Stanley, Southwest Harbor
Earl Thurlow, Bass Harbor
Malcolm Pettegrew, Southwest Harbor
Robert and Donald Walls, Bar Harbor
Carroll M. Haskell, Stonington

The individuals listed above agreed to be interviewed for this study. They were identified as persons with knowledge and expertise about the history of fishing and traditional fishing practices on Mount Desert Island or in Otter Creek, or who were knowledgeable about the history of Otter Creek Village.

Appendix 2

The Baiting House

By Harold Walls (n.d.)

The old building had occupied its site on the east side of Otter Cove since at least the early 1800's. In more recent times it came to be known simply and justly as the baiting house.

Over the years it had been the birth-place and home of several successive families of fisher-folk. Young men had brought their brides to this humble abode. The men had followed in footsteps of men of the sea, gone before, sailing their Friendship sloops and straining at the oars of their dories. The women had helped to salt the great brown-specked cod and the blue-sheened pollack. They had baited the trawl-lines, scrubbed the rough pine floors, cooked the simple fare of the day, and borne babies. The children had romped throughout the long days of summer, making sand tracks that would, with the flooding tide, be washed into oblivion...the eventual destiny of all man's markings. Time passed. The men, now grown old and bent, and the women, broken from their toil, had, in their turn, gone to the little, scattered, now obscure burial plots. Now, the first chapter in the long history of the building has drawn to its completion, its ending.

With the passing of the years the old building no longer resounded to the footsteps and the happy shouts of children. Changing circumstances had finally written a demise of this era that had, so indelibly, left an imprint on the lives of its occupants. But the old building, now fast weathering in its lonely vigil 'gainst the winter snows and the scorplings of summer suns, was to participate in one last chapter of its coastal destiny. It would now become the "baiting house" where the groups of fishermen would prepare their lines for tomorrow's quest of finny bounty.

The hundreds of hooks, each with their cube of herring or meat of the clam or mussel, would be carefully placed along the miles of line that would, in turn, be coiled into the wooden trawl tubs. The mussel was the most commonly used bait, especially for winter-time fishing. Many times the floor space would be piled high with crocus sacks full of the blue-hued bivalves, procured from the tidal flats of the Island's coves.

This baiting expedition was, in itself, an experience. During spells of low-drain tides, one could wade off to the "beds," and in a short while, sufficient numbers of the mollusks would be toted up to the half-tide area of the beach and dumped. After the gathering operation was completed, the bounty had to be separated from its clinging cloak of mud and stone and, once again, back in their half-bushel baskets, washed in the now incoming tide.

These mussels, all twenty bushels sometimes, must now in the following days, be “shelled.” This was accomplished, each one, with three deft flashes of the sheller’s knife. The meats were then salted into buckets, preferably wooden, to be used in future baitings for the silvery haddock and giant cod.

During days when the Egg Rock horn moaned its somber warnings of snow over the northeast breeze, or the majestic monster waves from a dying storm still battered the ramparts of the little harbor, the old building would resound once again to voices of people – the ribald oaths and obscene raillery of the primitive fishermen. I should say, that the use of the word “primitive” is not intended, nor should it be interpreted, as the slightest attempt to disparage. Theirs was a drama played in earlier time, the roles of which were “real life” and were judged by criteria, the terms of which, sometimes included the word survival.



Figure 29: The “Baiting House” in Otter Cove. In Walls (n.d.).

While in this vein of thought, I will swing open the old, weathered bait-house door on a morning, in this time of long ago. I remember a few of the last mussel shellers; others, through oft-recounted tellings, and yellowing records of anecdotes, come alive for me.

There was Bill Carter, short of stature, wide of girth. His face, large, red, and shiny, seemed always about to break into an angelic, somehow impish, certainly devilish grin. This came, most predictably, when and if, he, coming from behind, could catch some un-wary victim. He would lift the unfortunate victim clear of the floor, and hold

him, pinioned in his massive arms. Only from a plea from his now gasping victim, would he unfold those enormous arms, thus freeing the unfortunate. It was Bill's best "caper," and always, then would that impish leer threaten to break into a smile.

Bill's preferred victim it seemed, was my own dad, Willis, who himself, reportedly had carried down from the mountain, the butt-end of a thirty-foot, eight inch diameter oak; a distance of some two miles. No evidence survives as to whether or not he and his two-hundred pound helper (who was unable to carry the butt-end) found it necessary to stop for rest en-route.

I remember Walter Stanley, narrow of shoulder, tall, austere, sporting a yellowing moustache, and capped with a smoothened shiny relic of a tall-crowned felt hat. "Cruust," with two u's and an emphasis long lost in the recountings, was his most blasphemous curse. One of Walter's most famed and visible attainments was that of his artistry of carving; bringing to life-like reality, from blocks of cedar, the beautiful green-touched eider drakes and the black, white-winged scoters. His long, spacious clap-boarded house, long since the victim of a lightening bolt, stood in century-long confirmation of his artistry in wood.

Then there were the brothers George and Martin Davis. They were not "dyed-in-the wool," full-time fishermen. This duo was to be found, not on the dependable, day-to-day basis of the "fishermen-only" clan. Their visits to the baiting house, it was noticed, seemed to coincide with the times, on occasion, when the meandering track of a deer, gave indication of a wintering herd in the cedar swamp beyond.

There was Ansel Davis, blood relative of the afore-mentioned George and Martin. Beyond that relationship, similarity all but ceased. George and Martin were "sometime-fishermen" – barely eligible to have their names carved into the old bait house wall, whereas Ansel was one of those dedicated, hard-driving types, of whom it is said, "he'll kill himself, working". He had a "nose for fish," or some instinctive sense that enabled him to "jig" more mackerel, "hand-line" more cod, catch more lobsters, or, bring home from a trawl set, at least one, beautiful halibut. His name was carved, deep and strong, into the wide, smoke-browned boards of the bait house wall.

There were others, whose whimsies and escapades, in their recountings, provided spice and drama. Ah, yes, the drama! There seemed always, to be left vacant in the mid-floor berths, several rope-trussed benches, those having the thickest crocus-sack cushioning. Upon the casual appropriation of those choicest seats by the prodigals, a pall of silence would fall upon the room. The clackety-clack of the shelling knives ceased; even the jets of tobacco juice, arcing toward a convenient rat-hole, diminished to an occasional squirt. The air was pregnant with expectancy. Usually there was no disappointment; only some days more, and some days fewer, of the little anecdotes and confidences.

These little recitations were, in retrospect, little revelations into the “warp and woof” of these characters.

Along with the passing of the scudding years, so did the passing and demise of a way of life come about.

The great schools of cod and haddock, in their annual pilgrimage into Frenchman’s Bay, whose numbers rewarded the efforts of the line fishermen, no longer came from the depths, each spring. Now, the larger boats, fitted with nets that swept clean the ocean bottom, gradually took their toll. This greedy rape of our resources continues today unabated, tragic in its implications.

The old building remained, for a while; I and an older brother baited an occasional tub of trawl line or sought the protection of the sagging roof to shelter some salted lobster bait from the scavenging sea gulls.

There came a year, when the cumulative results of the storms of life had tallied their toll ‘gainst my brother, now an old man; ‘gainst too, the old building from under whose portals he had gone for some seventy years of sea-faring.

To you who may be one of the multitude, who, with canvas and paint, sought each summer, to capture the magic of the old weathered building at Otter Cove – we share an empathy, born of appreciation for the simple ways of life, the beautiful ways of life, the people, and the old building.

My involvement, both physical and emotional, over a life-time with this shore-side area at Otter Cove, the old bait house and the homely, honest people who tarried there in their journey, creates for me, a nostalgic reverie that is both fulfilling, and saddening.

So, in parting, if, with the foregoing, I have provided a moment of pleasing thought preoccupation, or perhaps filled any little breach in the recorded annals of local history, I am doubly rewarded. This, notwithstanding, I have long felt compelled to make possible an image; a recognizable mind picture of a time, a place, and a people that are lost except for accounts such as these, and memories.

APPENDIX 3

Picking the Slip

By Harold Walls (n.d.)

*The sun had ceased its reign
and storm clouds gathered on this day,
An old man, bent and motion slow,
Tugged wave-thrown stones aside,
that stopped his labored way.*

*A way that had been cleared
since long ago, by hands then young,
Great sea-thrust boulders, weed-decked,
Must now again, from hallowed path, be flung.*

*The old man paused, the "faster" rain now trekked,
Dilute with sweat, his toil-spent face.
His eyes, but for the moment blurred,
seek now the path-course yet must clear,
To aid his laggard pace.*

*From beach-top, where wild rose contend
With cottage gray and old,
It winds its tortured way, this path.
When cleared, promote . . .
An easier access for the age-slowed man
To reach his love . . . his BOAT*

Explanation of "Picking the Slip"

In an era of time past, the commercial fishing enterprise was often a small-crew pursuit. These crews of two, sometimes only one individual, kept their craft moored in numerous harbors and coves along the coast-line.

They needed tenders: small row-boats by which to reach their larger craft anchored in mid-harbor. They also needed access from their houses or their trucks at beach-top, over the boulder-strewn distance to the tenders at water's edge.

They gained this access by laboriously tugging aside these sea-smoothed, weed-decked stones. Thus moved, there was remaining, a somewhat smoothed and usable pathway.

Many times during some years, the stones would again be thrown back into path by storm waves, into the path so painfully cleared. Thus my poem, "Picking the Slip."



Figure 30: Harold Walls standing next to his punt at the top of the slip. In Walls (n.d.).

APPENDIX 4

OTTER CREEK COD FISHERMEN 1870

<u>Name of Fisherman</u>	<u>Household Number</u>
Pierce, Ezekiel	139
———, William	
Calchon, William	142
Bracy, James	143
Bracy, John	145
Bracy, George	147
Dodge, Gideon	148
Clement, James	150
———, Chara?	
Brown, Michael	153
David, Jaimee	154
Turnbull, Joseph	155
———, Charles	
Davis, Samuel	156
Davis, Thomas	157
Davis, William	158
Walls, James	159
Walls, William K.	160
Grover, George	161
Davis, Samuel	162

OTTER CREEK COD FISHERMEN 1870 (CONT.)

<u>Name of Fisherman</u>	<u>Household Number</u>
Bracy, David Jr.	164
Bracy, Davis	165
Walls, James J.	166
Davis, Andrew T.	167
Walls,	168
Walls, Samuel J.	169
Walls, William T.	171

Note: The occupation of these individuals was identified as “Cod Fisherman.” In each household, the first name listed was that of the head of household, who in all cases was a fisherman.

(Source: 1870 Census of the Town of Mt. Desert, Hancock County, Maine)

APPENDIX 5

OTTER CREEK FISHERMEN 1880

<u>Name of Fisherman</u>	<u>Household Number</u>
Savage, Fred	73
Kimball, Daniel	76
Smallider, Josiah	80
———, Herbert	
Davis, Daniel K.	81
Bracy, Frank	82
Turnbull, Charles	83
Davis, Thomas L.	87
Davis, William H.	89
Smith, Jullian	90
Grover, George	93
Walls, William H.	93*
Grover, George W.	94
Davis, Andrew	95
———, Kensington	
Walls, Daniel K.	97
———, Fred H.	
Walls, Samuel J.	99
———, Samuel Jr.	
Walls, Willis J.	103

OTTER CREEK FISHERMEN 1880 (CONT.)

<u>Name of Fisherman</u>	<u>Household Number</u>
Smith, Charles	104
Lyman, Eri T.	110
Smallider,	113
Dodge, Bidern	115
Dodge, Wastman	116
Bracy, John	117
Jordan, George	
Bracy, George	118
Pierce, William	120
———, Waldon	
———, (illegible)	
S(illegible)	121
Talmadge, John	122

*Two separate households were assigned the number 93 by the enumerator.

Note: The occupation of these individuals was identified as "Fisherman." In each household, the first name listed was that of the head of household, who in all cases was a fisherman.

(Source: 1880 Census of the Town of Mt. Desert, Hancock County, Maine)

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