

FISHING THE NORTH ATLANTIC

Introduction

For millennia, fishing has provided European and North American fishing nations with a staple food supply.

An insatiable demand for fish, particularly codfish and herring, gave birth to European and North American commercial fisheries, and fishing remains a primary resource industry in the North Atlantic countries.

Historically, not only were populations on both continents growing, but both the Catholic Church's admonitions to consume fish on many different holy days, and coupled with centuries of overseas exploration and armed conflict, fed the demand, particularly for dried codfish.

Fishing nations able to provide a staple food source came to dominate the European trade. Dried fish was just about the only protein staple that preserved and travelled well, and so a lucrative trade for such fish developed throughout Europe before more modern methods of fish preservation were developed.

Today, their fishing fleets have continued as major industrial activities, and the countries' shore facilities for processing and transporting the fish catch to its markets have kept apace with modern technological innovations.

However, increased mechanization within the fishing industry has led to a crisis in traditional fisheries, with overfishing by most all fishing nations now of particular concern. What remains sustainable is now an open question.

Purpose and Scope

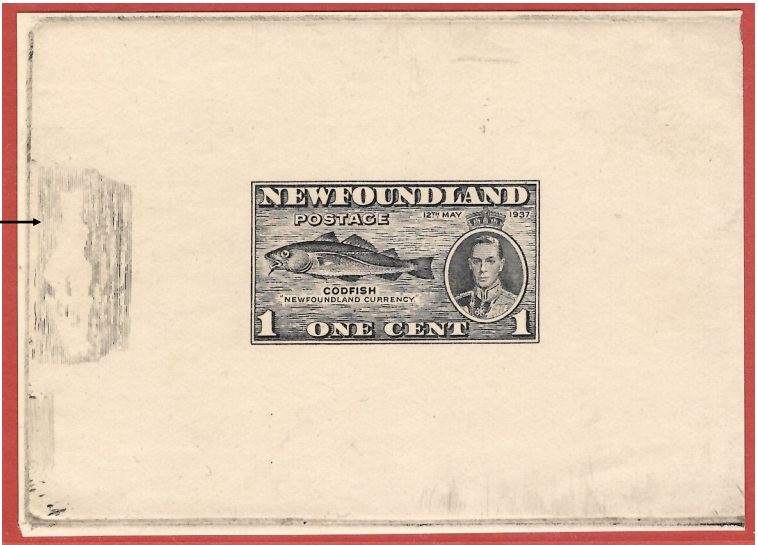
This exhibit shows the development of the modern commercial fishing industry in the North Atlantic from its beginnings in prehistoric, Medieval and early mercantile Europe, through the era of European exploration and settlement of the east coast of North America, and up to the present day. Types of fishing vessels, the varieties of the fish catch, various fishing methods, developments in fish processing, and the lives of fishermen are also included within its story line.

Organization and Treatment

The exhibit follows a thematic treatment with chapters organized according to the Plan. Material has been sourced from among a comprehensive variety of possible elements; thus, although the primary material is related to postal issues, a significant amount of other para-philatelic elements, i.e., illustrated mail, corner cards, poster and Cinderella stamps, and picture post cards are also included within the material shown. As well, interspersed within the exhibit, several 'philatelic studies' are also shown for greater depth.

The Codfish:

Often considered the most important seafood catch of the North Atlantic



Die Proof Printer: Perkins, Bacon & Co., England

Note: the silhouette of a codfish on the left side of the proof was intentional on the part of the engraver.



Poster Stamps: often issued to advertise the fishery, e.g., "Eat More Belgian Fish!"

PLAN

- Early European Fisheries
- European Fishermen in North America
- North American Fisheries
- The Fish Catch
- Fishing Methods
- Fishing Vessels
- The Fishing Industry
- Fish Processing
- The People
- Religion and Philanthropy
- The Fishing Heritage
- Fisheries in Crisis

Scarce material is shown mounted on a **RED** paper matte, and usually with additional comments on rarity, if known.

The trawler: the fisherman's work horse, and **the fisherman**, the principal player.



Publisher and Photographer: Léon Briand, Saint Pierre and Miquelon