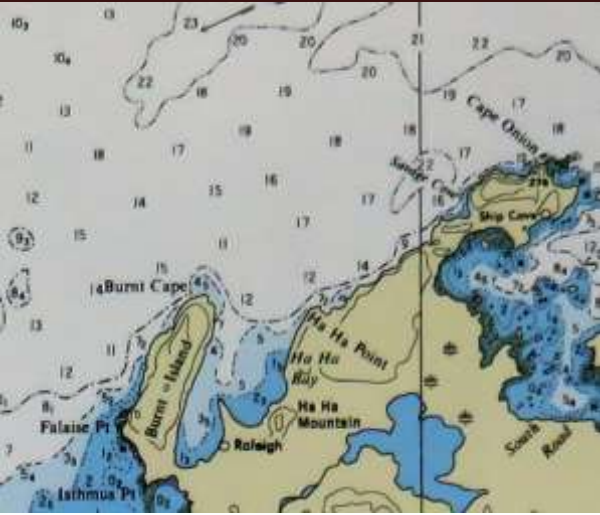


# Raleigh



## Edmund Taylor Raleigh



Lobster pots at the wharf in Raleigh. Photo by Kathleen Tucker

### He gave up Fishing...

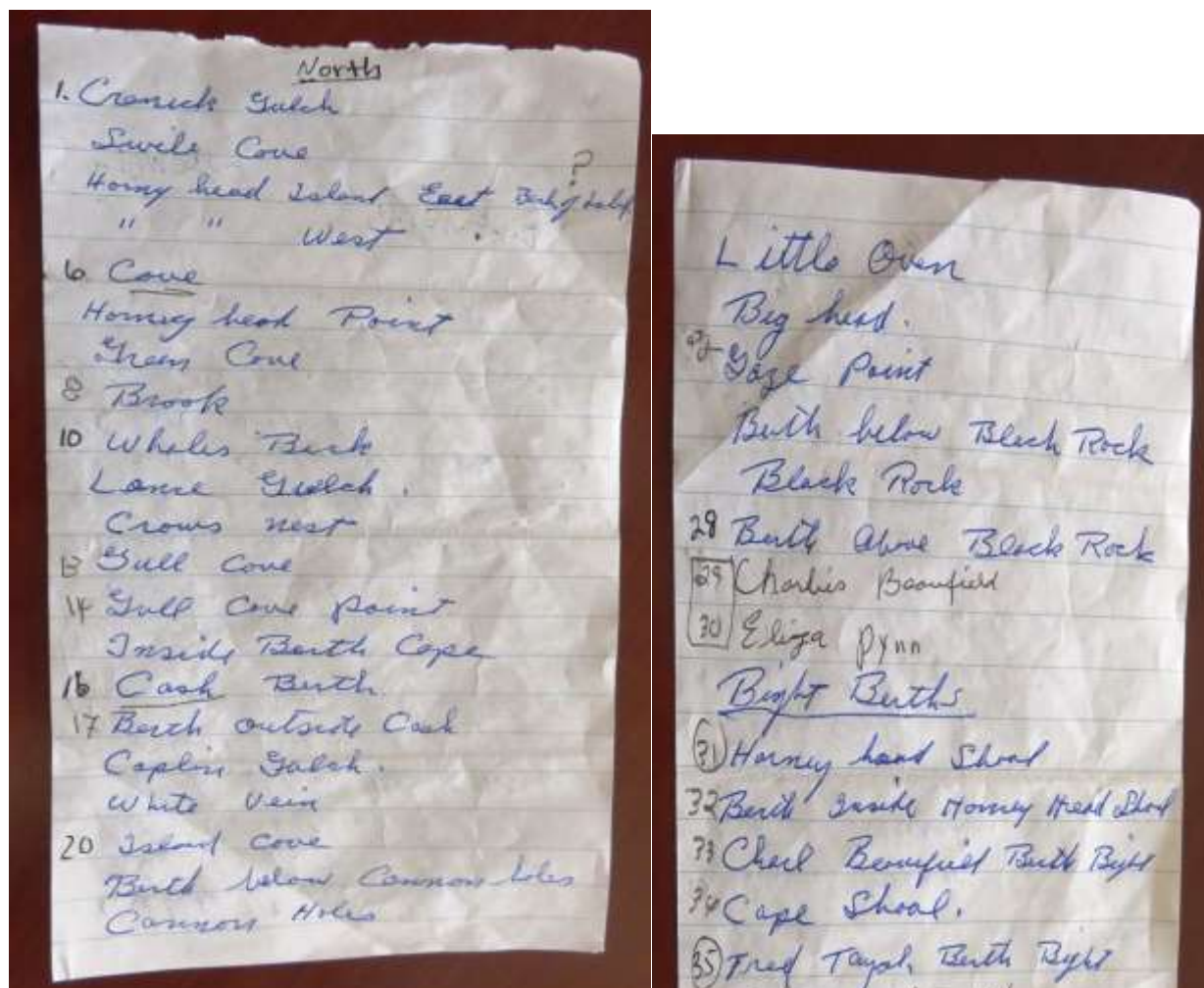
Edmund Taylor knows every trap berth in the area, though he didn't fish for long. As a boy he fished with his dad. "When I got big enough, I went in the boat with my dad, Ken Taylor, but I was his only son, so he had to hire sharemen to fish the cod traps. Later, when the fish got scarce, the local fishermen combined their crews and Dad sold his trap to Uncle George Decker in L'Anse aux Meadows."



Edmund Taylor's Mail Boat 1958

"About that time, people started getting long-liners and going out further to fish. In the late '60s and early '70s the fishery was already dying," says Edmund.

"I gave up fishing and took up the Mail Boat instead," he says. Canada Post hired Edmund to deliver mail to communities on the tip of the northern peninsula twice a week, and when he wasn't delivering mail he was operating a water taxi business.



Edmund Taylor's list of Raleigh Trap Berths

## Edward Bessey Raleigh

--Photos by Kathleen Tucker



Fishermen at Raleigh

Edward Bessey, son of Alf Bessey, was born in Raleigh in 1929. He married Martha Blake in 1955; she was the daughter of Israel Blake. She and Edward had five children: four boys and a girl.

Edward started fishing with his dad, Alf Bessey, his Uncle George (Alf's brother) and Uncle Al Taylor (married to Alf's sister). They started off with <sup>i</sup>trawls; then Alf Bessey bought a <sup>ii</sup>trap from Harry Adams.

Eventually, Alf gave up fishing and went to work in Goose Bay, so Edward and his Uncle George fished for a while, but they decided to part ways, so they split up the gear and Edward went out on his own, hiring <sup>iii</sup>sharemen. There were six in Edward's crew: Alan Taylor, Everett Blake, Cyril Campbell, Clayton Grinham, and two sharemen, John Broderick and Jim Hurley from Herring Neck.

### The Draw System put an end to disputes and 'bad friends'

"Before the Draw, in the spring of the year once the ice was gone, someone might row out and put their marker in someone else's berth, and then they'd kick up all kinds of fuss over it. And then they'd become bad friends and have a <sup>iv</sup>row with one another. So that's when it was decided to put the berths in a draw."

### Before the Draw System:

- Elliotts fished the Cash Berth.
- Abe Beaufield fished Arnie Head Point.

- Sim Elliott fished Crannick Gulch.
- Edward Bessey fished Arnie Head Island East and Little Oven.

Tidy berths: a tidy berth was a stretch of water, especially fishing grounds, subject to the turbulence of ocean currents and the ebb and flow of the tide.

- Crannick Gulch Point
- Swile Cove (if the fish were running, other fishermen would put their traps out to catch more fish. This was not an established trap berth, but fishermen put their traps wherever they could)
- Island Cove. There was a lot of tide coming around the Cape.
- Cannon holes

### How the Draw System Worked

Edward Bessey recalls, “All the names of the skippers went into a paper bag and all the names of the berths went into another bag. Now, there was three of us: I was the Chairman at the time, and I had a man on either side of me; one had the names, one had the berths. The bags would be shaken up and I’d draw out the name. I’d call the skipper; he’d come up and put his hand in the bag and draw his berth. That was the first draw.

“Now, second draw, you could only have a second draw if you had two traps. There was only six or seven crews had two traps and they were entitled to a second draw, and when you drew your berth that was it. There were no other words about it; that was your berth for the summer.

“The big fish killers like the Elliotts used to have four or five cod traps. They had two crews, two motorboats, six men in a boat. There were still only two draws. If they put their traps out and weren’t catching much fish, they had extra traps and they’d put those out wherever they thought they could catch more fish, as long as they didn’t set their traps in someone else’s draw berth.

As for the Cash Berth, Mr. Bessey laughs, “If a feller got the cash berth, he had her made. He had his wallet full!”

### A good summer’s fishing

In his memory, Edward Bessey’s best summer was when they brought in 600<sup>v</sup> quintals of fish for the four of them (his father’s crew): 400 light salted (shore fish) and 200 Labrador. “If you had 100 quintals a man, you had what you call a good summer.”

### Putting away the fish

Fish was stored in the stage, salted, until there was enough to wash it out and put it on flakes to dry. Bessey remembers, “That was hard work. You had to wash it and pack it up in the stage. <sup>vi</sup>Water horse fish was newly-washed fish, ready to wheel out onto the flakes to dry. <sup>vii</sup>Labrador fish was sold in bulk, and to put in one bulk of fish you needed twenty wheelbarrow-full of salt.”

Fishing was hard work, but it wasn't just the men who worked hard. Edward's wife Martha brought their children down to the stage in a baby carriage while she spread the fish to dry on the flakes. She cooked for the six sharemen as well, and did their laundry, scrubbing the clothes on a washboard and hanging them on a clothesline. The sharemen stayed in a bunkhouse and she cleaned that up as well.



Looking at Raleigh (on the right) from The Neck

### Bessey gave up fishing

Eventually Edward gave up fishing. "There wasn't enough anymore." In the early '60s he went to work for Lundrigans, building the Raleigh road. He says he turned the first sod with the old D7 tractor on the Ship Cove Road, and worked for Lundrigan's for six summers on heavy equipment. He worked at other jobs too, such as clearing brush, and in the end, he worked for Highways (now called the Department of Transportation and Works) for close to 19 years, and then retired.

## Gayden Pynn Raleigh

--Photos by Kathleen Tucker



Pynn's wharf and stages

### A fisherman until the <sup>viii</sup>Moratorium

Gayden Pynn fished pretty near all his life, right up till the Moratorium. Born in 1939, he started working in the boats when he was nine years old, and remembers that he cried because he wanted to go out fishing so badly.

He laughs, “After I was at it awhile I wished they’d kick me out of it.” He remembers in those days the bay was full of schooners. In Raleigh, a fisherman could put his trap anywhere as long as there was 70 fathoms distance between traps, from linnet to linnet on each trap.

There were three crews of Pynns in the heyday of fishing: Ebenezer Pynn, Uncle Elijah Pynn, and Uncle Charles Pynn. Later, there was Uncle Noah Smith.

### <sup>ix</sup>Rooms in Raleigh

- Elijah Pynn (one room, and it's the one you see today)
- Gayden's father and his crew

- Charles Pynn (three brothers). After they gave up fishing, they turned the room over to Noah Smith.
- Charles Beaufield had a room with three stages.



Raleigh Historic Properties and Pynn's Wharf

### Best summer for fishing

The best summers were measured, not in dollars, but in quintals of fish. Gayden's memory of their best summer fishing was when he and his father teamed up with Charles Beaufield. "There were six of us that summer: Charlies and Cal, me and the old man, and Clayton and Don Grinham. Charles had a 32' motorboat and my, oh my, what fish we caught at Arnie Head Island Berth! My son, you'd hardly believe the fish that come out of it. We salted 900<sup>x</sup> quintals of<sup>xi</sup> shore fish. I was about 15 or 16 year old. Me and Clayte Grinham was the two salters: he and I salted every fish, and I'm pretty sure we salted some salt-bulk fish, too: perhaps 200-300 quintals of the 900 quintals we took in. Me and Clayte was<sup>xiii</sup> sharemen; I believe we made \$900 dollars each that summer."



Pynn's wharves and stages. Stacked wood in foreground. Alwyn Sansford Photo



## Merchants

The Pynns bought their supplies from the local merchants: the Elliotts. Gayden remembers that when the merchant sold their catch in the fall, there was only enough for the local fisherman to ‘come square’ with the merchant. Later, schooners would come around to the communities with their <sup>xiii</sup>cullers to grade and buy the fish. This loosened the hold the merchants had on the fishery, but still the fishermen felt they weren’t getting a square deal with merchants or schooners. While the merchant gave credit, the schooner captains gave cash for their catches.



L-R: Hauling a cod trap at Crannick Gulch: Amos Pynn, Gayden Pynn, Gayden Jr., Baxter Smith, Mary Pynn and their father, Ebenezer Pynn. Photo contributed by Gayden Pynn.

## Storms

All it took in Raleigh was a nor’easter and a big sea to snarl up the traps and grapelins. “After the storm you’d gather them all up, take them ashore, <sup>xiv</sup>scun them together and get them back out so you could catch fish.” He remembers storms that swept away their wharves and <sup>xv</sup>stages—when everything was washed ashore. There was a June gale in his father’s time that <sup>xvi</sup>hove away traps, <sup>xvii</sup>grapelins and all their gear.

Recommended viewing: Video: Turning Tides (Fishing Berth lottery draw)

[http://www.raleighhistoricvillage.com/media\\_gallery.php#TURNINGTIDES](http://www.raleighhistoricvillage.com/media_gallery.php#TURNINGTIDES)

A re-enactment of the trap berth fishery draw system, circa 1958.

## Raleigh Trap Berths

--Information contributed by Edmund Taylor, Edward Bessey and Gayden Pynn Sr.--

1. Crannick Gulch. Prime. Fished by Sim Elliott prior to the Draw System. A tidey berth.
2. Swile Cove. 2nd Draw. A tidey berth (if the fish were running, other fishermen would put their traps out to catch more fish. Not an established trap berth).
3. Arnie Head Point. Prime. Fished by Abe Beaufield prior to the Draw System.
4. Arnie Island East. Prime. Fished by Edward Bessey prior to the Draw System.
5. Arnie Island West. Prime.
6. Middle Arnie Head Cove. Prime.
7. Green Cove. 2nd Draw.
8. The Brook. Prime.
9. Whale's Back. Prime.
10. Launch Gulch. 2nd Draw.
11. Crow's Nest. 2nd Draw.
12. Gull Cove. 2nd Draw.
13. Arnie Head Shoal. Prime.
14. Middle Berth in the Bight. 2nd Draw.
15. Fred Taylor's Berth. 2nd Draw.
16. Charlie Beaufield's Berth in the Bight. 2nd Draw.
17. Nipper's Nest. 2nd Draw.
18. Cash Berth. Prime. It was said if you drew this berth your wallet was full. This berth was fished by the Elliotts before the Draw System came into effect.
19. North of the Cash Berth. Prime.
20. White Vein. 2nd Draw.
21. Island Cove Point. Secondary. This was called a tidey berth, meaning the tides were strong. There was a lot of tide coming around the Cape.
22. The Big Cannon holes. 2nd Draw. A tidey berth.
23. Little Cannon Holes. 2nd Draw. A tidey berth.
24. Big Head. Prime.
25. Gauge Point. Prime.
26. Black Rock. Prime.
27. Inside Black Rock. Prime.
28. Theophilus Pynn's Berth in the Bay. Prime.
29. The Little Oven. Prime. Edward Bessey fished this berth prior to the Draw System.
30. Gull Point Cove. 2nd Draw.
31. Capelin Gulch. Prime.
32. Below Black Rock. Prime.
33. Elijah Pynn's Berth. 2nd Draw.
34. Cape Shoal. 2nd Draw.
35. Berth below Swile Cove. 2nd Draw.
36. Lower Gull Cove. 2nd Draw.
37. Back of Big Head Berth. 2nd Draw.

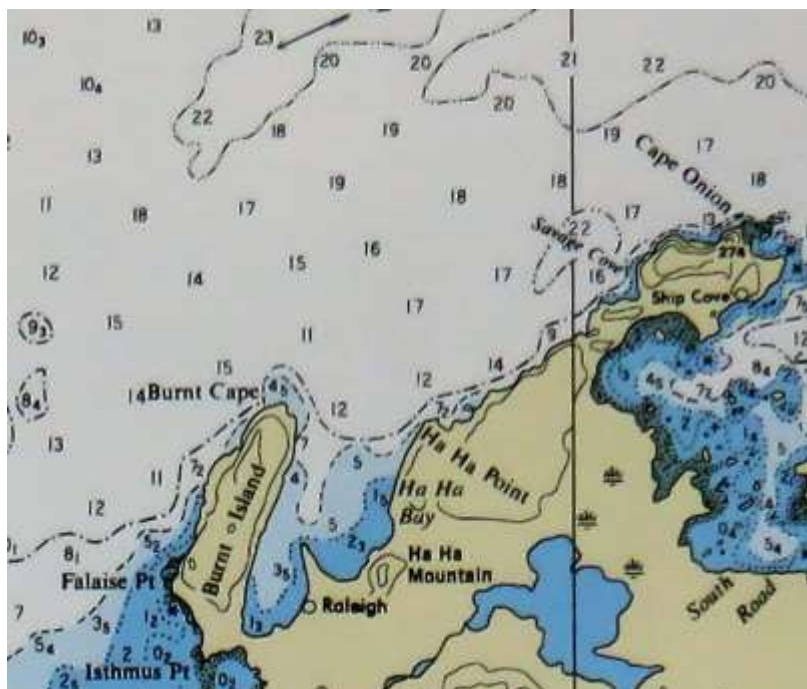


Figure 1 Raleigh nautical chart

<sup>i</sup> Trawl: a buoyed line, of great length, to which short lines with baited hooks are attached at intervals.

<sup>ii</sup> Trap: a type of fixed fishing-gear used in inshore waters, box-shaped with a length of net stretching from shore to entrance through which cod enter and are trapped.

<sup>iii</sup> Shareman: member of a fishing crew who receives a stipulated proportion of the profits of a voyage rather than wages.

<sup>iv</sup> Row: argument or dispute

<sup>v</sup> Quintal: A measure of dried and salted cod-fish ready for the market; 112 lbs.

<sup>vi</sup> To place split and salted cod-fish, just removed from a 'washing vat,' in a stack to drain; HORSE.

<sup>vii</sup> Labrador: A variety of heavily salted, semi-dried cod produced in the Labrador fishery; often attributed with designations of 'cure' or grade.

<sup>viii</sup> Moratorium: Newfoundland's historic cod fisheries attracted local and international fishing fleets for almost five centuries before the Canadian government shut the industry down indefinitely in July 1992. By then, once-plentiful fish stocks had dwindled to near extinction and officials feared they would disappear entirely if the fisheries remained open. The moratorium put about 30,000 people in the province out of work and ended a way of life that had endured for generations in many outport communities. It also made evident the vulnerability of marine resources to overexploitation and that existing regulatory regimes were insufficient to protect cod stocks.

<sup>ix</sup> Rooms: a tract or parcel of land on the waterfront of a cove or harbour from which a fishery is conducted; the stores, sheds, 'flakes,' wharves and other facilities where the catch is landed and processed, and the crew housed.

<sup>x</sup> Quintal: A measure of dried and salted cod-fish ready for the market; 112 lbs.

<sup>xi</sup> Shore fish: cod-fish prepared for market with light application of salt and extended drying period.

<sup>xii</sup> Sharemen: member of a fishing crew who receives a stipulated proportion of the profits of a voyage rather than wages.

<sup>xiii</sup> Culler: One employed to sort dried and salted cod-fish into grades by quality, size and 'cure'.

<sup>xiv</sup> To fasten parts of a fish-net together; to repair a net, often in temporary fashion.

<sup>xv</sup> Stage: an elevated platform on the shore with working tables, sheds, where fish are landed and processed for salting and drying, and fishing gear and supplies are stored; FISHING STAGE.

<sup>xvi</sup> Hove: (heave) to lift, bring, move, or throw.

<sup>xvii</sup> Grapnel: Light anchor to moor small boats and fixed or stationary fishing gear.