

# DEEP SEA NEWS

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## 'There She Blows!'

### WHALERS CHASE BIG GAME FOR ONLY STATION ON CONTINENT

By ERNEST SNOWBERGER

The thousands of visitors who visit the whalery at Fields Landing to watch the blubber being peeled off a whale in three large strips, like the peeling of a banana, are seeing the second stage of a process that begins with a cry of "There she blows!" on a killer boat out at sea.

The blubber and gore of the rendering process are a far cry from the round sleek back of a finback, sounding, then sur-facing and blowing spray high into the air.

The whaling station here, operated by Maritime Industries, is the only one on the North American continent. Skippers "Gib" Hunter and Herman Folland of the killer boats "Dennis Gayle" and "Lynn Ann," recently purchased the whaling station and are planning extensive improvements for the attraction of tourists next season.

#### EXHIBITS PLANNED

A permanent display of whaling exhibits is planned, as well as additional parking space. Productive facilities are also being improved with a new high speed, high volume oil separator, new piping, drainage system and two new trucks.

An indication of the great interest of the public in the whaling station is the coming special event broadcast of the ABC radio network on Tuesday, September 28, at 9:45 p. m.

A part of the whaling operation not seen by the public is the hunt at sea for the whales. Eight days is the longest any of the whaling boats has stayed out to get a whale. The shortest time for a kill was a four-hour trip just outside the bar of Humboldt bay.

When a spout, caused by the whale forcing out heated air after holding its breath for a long period, is sighted, the whaling boat leaps toward them, the whales play about like overgrown porpoises.

#### WHALE HARPOONED

The crew watches intently as the whales sound and surface. Suddenly one surfaces just off the bow. A terrific explosion from the old-fashioned Norwegian powder gun sends a harpoon hissing into the whale.

A dull boom is heard as the bombhead on the harpoon explodes inside the whale. The force of impact has set off a three-second delayed fuse to the bomb. The impact also breaks a cord binding

four prongs on the harpoon and they spring open, sinking a firm hold into the whale.

Sometimes the first shot does not kill the whale and he must be played with the winch like a game fish until close enough for a second shot.

#### BODY PUMPED UP

When killed, the whale rolls over and sinks like a huge stone. The winch quickly takes up the slack and then slowly drags up the 60 or 70-ton hulk. When the whale breaks surface alongside the boat, a hollow pipe is jabbed into the body cavity and air is pumped into it to make it float.

With the tail of the whale hoisted clear of the water with a chain, the boat starts the tow back to Fields Landing.

Now the process which can be viewed by visitors begins. A wooden slip about 25 feet wide rises from the water at the edge of Humboldt bay to the flensing dock. This wooden deck is 75 feet wide by 125 feet long. It is built of a crushed rock base with an asphalt top. On top of this is laid the wooden floor of 2x4 timbers laid on edge. The deck must be strong to take the weight of a 70-ton whale.

#### BROUGHT UP ON DECK

As the killer boat eases up toward the slip, a rowboat carries the end of a steel cable out from the land station. The cable is made fast to the whale's tail and he is pulled to the end of the slip by a big steam winch. There, if the whale is particularly large, cables from one or both of two other steam winches may be attached and the whale is pulled up the slip to the main deck.

Now the flenser takes over to direct the cutting up of the whale. He is a Norwegian with some 20 years' experience. An artist at his work, he is highly skilled and must know just where to make each cut.

A V-shaped flap is cut at the head and a hook secured in it. A warp to which the hook is at-

tached is then taken to a winch, by which a strip of blubber the whole length of the whale is peeled off.

#### BLUBBER PULLED OFF

The strips of blubber are 40 feet long and from 2 to 5 inches thick. Cutters chop it up into 30 or 40-pound hunks which can be handled by one man. The hunks of blubber are tossed onto a continuous belt elevator that carries them up to the top of one of the huge digesters or boilers.

The flenser continues to cut up the meat of the whale and finishes the job in about 2 1/2 hours. The best of the pure, lean meat is placed on racks and frozen for sale as fresh meat for dog food. There is from 7 to 10 tons of good red meat on every whale.

#### OIL PRESSED OUT

The balance of the meat is put into a bit chopper which cuts it into one-inch squares and then into a second chopper which hammers it. After cooking, an eight-ton press squeezes all the oil and liquid out. A 40-foot rotating drier thoroughly dries the meat and it is then sacked as meal to be used for animal feed and fertilizer.

The crew cuts up the liver, which may weigh from 800 pounds to two tons. It is salted down in wooden barrels and stored in a refrigerator room at a temperature of about 20 degrees Fahrenheit. The liver is valuable as a source of vitamin A units. Humpback whale liver contains about four times as much vitamin A as finback or sperm liver.

About 1700 gallons of whale oil is obtained from the blubber and meat of an average whale. Almost the entire whale is processed and sold.

#### HONOR FOR BOWRON

LOS ANGELES—Mayor Fletcher Bowron, who will have been in office for 10 years tomorrow, will be honored with a special luncheon to be attended by 1000 civic leaders on Tuesday. The affair will be at the Biltmore Bowl.

Spareribs are delicious cooked with canned tomatoes. Season with onion, brown sugar, ground cloves and salt and pepper.

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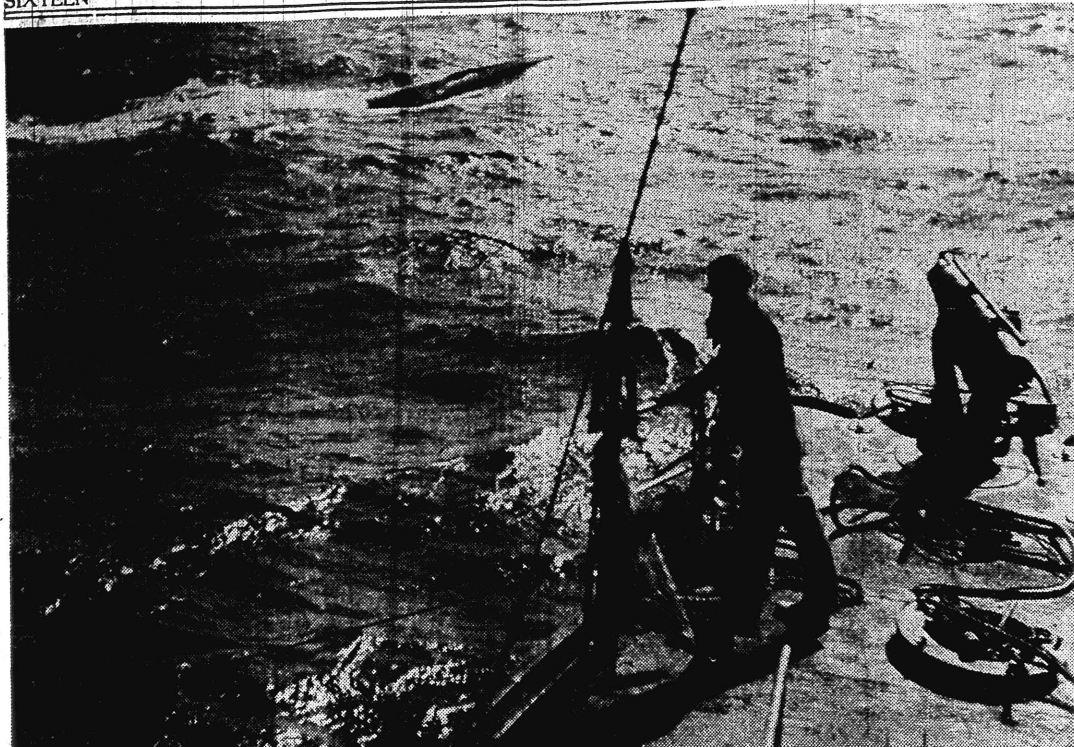
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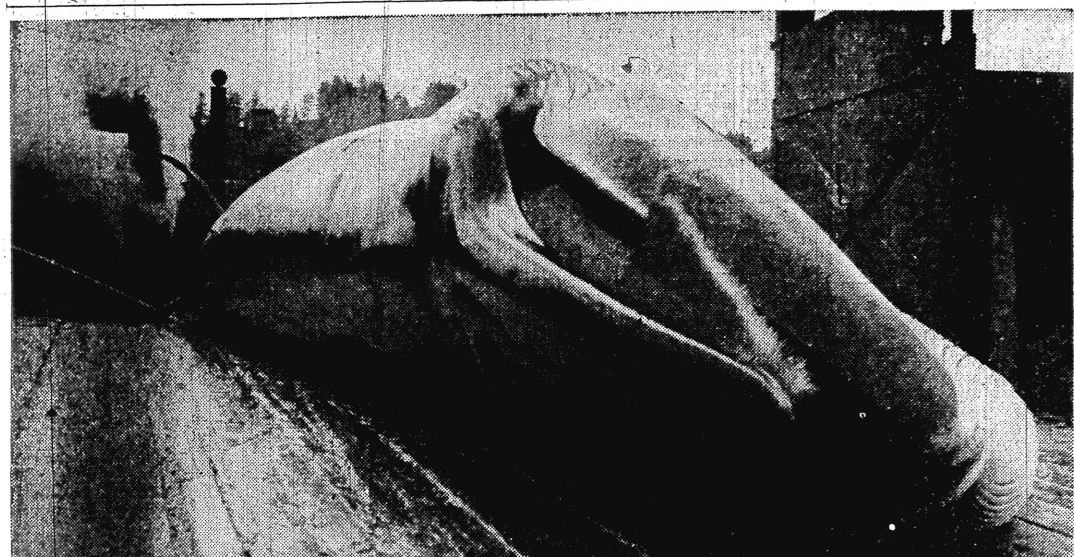
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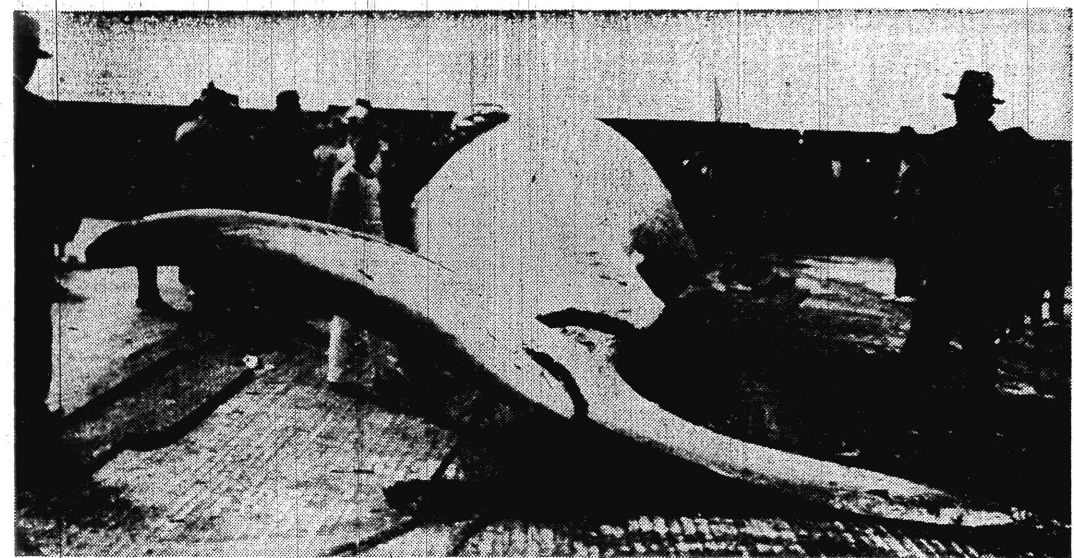
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A Finback whale surfaces as mate is harpooned to the left. A harpoon and Norwegian powder gun are visible.



A 65-ton Finback lies with its back visible. The brushes strain out its food, small, red shrimp.



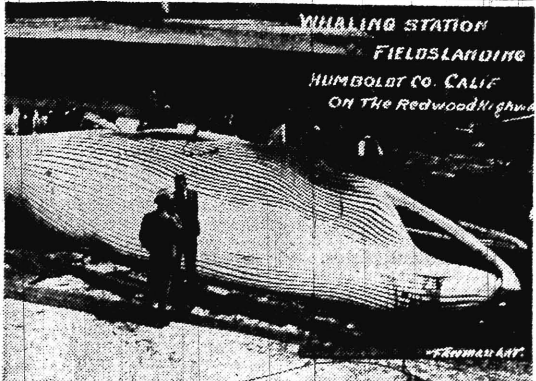
A Finback tail makes a propeller-like design. Fin backs are bluish black on top, white underneath.



Whale meat is being chopped up and tossed on conveyor which carries it to chopper for conversion to meal.



Shown above is a machined bomb head which is loaded with black powder and screwed onto the head of a harpoon. The delayed fuse of the bomb is set off when the harpoon strikes a whale. The bombhead in favor with local whalers is of cast iron and has four wings.



The grooved belly of a Finback whale, largest type whale of the lot, is here inspected by visitors at the Fields Landing whaling station. Despite the gaping mouth, a whale's throat is seldom larger than a man's fist. Humpback and Sperm whales are also killed here.