

IX.—REPORT ON THE OPERATIONS OF THE STEAMER HALCYON FOR THE YEAR ENDING DECEMBER 31, 1886.

[Abstract.]

At the beginning of the year this steamer (formerly known as the *Lookout*) was at Battery Station in winter-quarters, where she remained undergoing repairs until March 28. The services of the crew were utilized for various items of shore duty when not required for painting, cleaning, and overhauling the steamer and its apparatus.

On March 28, with Assistant Commissioner Ferguson and William Hamlen on board, she proceeded to Baltimore, to take on articles for use in shad-hatching, and 12 men for spawn-takers. After returning, the vessel remained at the station until April 15, when she proceeded to Baltimore, and on the 17th to Saint Jerome Station, with the assistant commissioner on board. On April 18 and 19 pound-nets were visited between Smith's Point and the mouth of Wicomico River. Proceeding up the Rappahannock River as far as Layton, 100 stake shad gill-nets and 58 pound-nets were counted. The vessel, needing repairs, proceeded to Baltimore, and was hauled out on the railway April 22, from which time until the 26th the shaft was undergoing repair.

From April 27 to May 23 the *Halcyon* was engaged in gathering and hatching shad spawn and in depositing the fry. A detailed report of this work has been published in the Fish Commission Bulletin for 1886, page 295. The total number of eggs procured was 4,561,000, a number far in excess of any previous year.

From the close of the shad season to May 27 the vessel was used for making freight trips between Battery Station and Havre de Grace. On that date she went to Wilmington, Del., with William P. Sauerhoff on board, to investigate the shad fisheries of the Delaware. After some slight repairs had been made to the vessel the assistant commissioner came on board and inspected her, after which she proceeded to Baltimore, arriving on the 28th. From this point Major Ferguson accompanied the vessel to Battery Station.

In May the equipment was increased by the addition of a light naphtha-engine launch. On June 4 the steamer was loaded with lumber and stores for Saint Jerome. After discharging the cargo she steamed to Washington navy-yard, and arrived June 6. Two days later, accompanied by the assistant commissioner, she proceeded to Saint Jerome, and afterwards to Battery Station. On June 10 the vessel proceeded to Havre de Grace, where the assistant commissioner left the ship.

From June 11 to the end of the month the vessel was used for several freight trips.

On June 30 the steamer proceeded to Hawkins Hole, behind Hampton Roads, and fitted up apparatus for the artificial hatching of crabs. On July 3 several female crabs were secured, the spawn of which was placed in hatching-jars. On July 8 deposited crab spawn in Elizabeth River. On July 10 secured the spawn of five female crabs and placed it in hatching-jars. On July 12 overhauled pound-nets in the vicinity of Back River Light. The catch of mackerel was very small, one net securing 130 mackerel and 25 pompanos, none of which were found to be ripe.

On July 28 the command of the vessel was turned over to William Hamlen, James A. Smith having been transferred to the command of the steamer Fish Hawk.

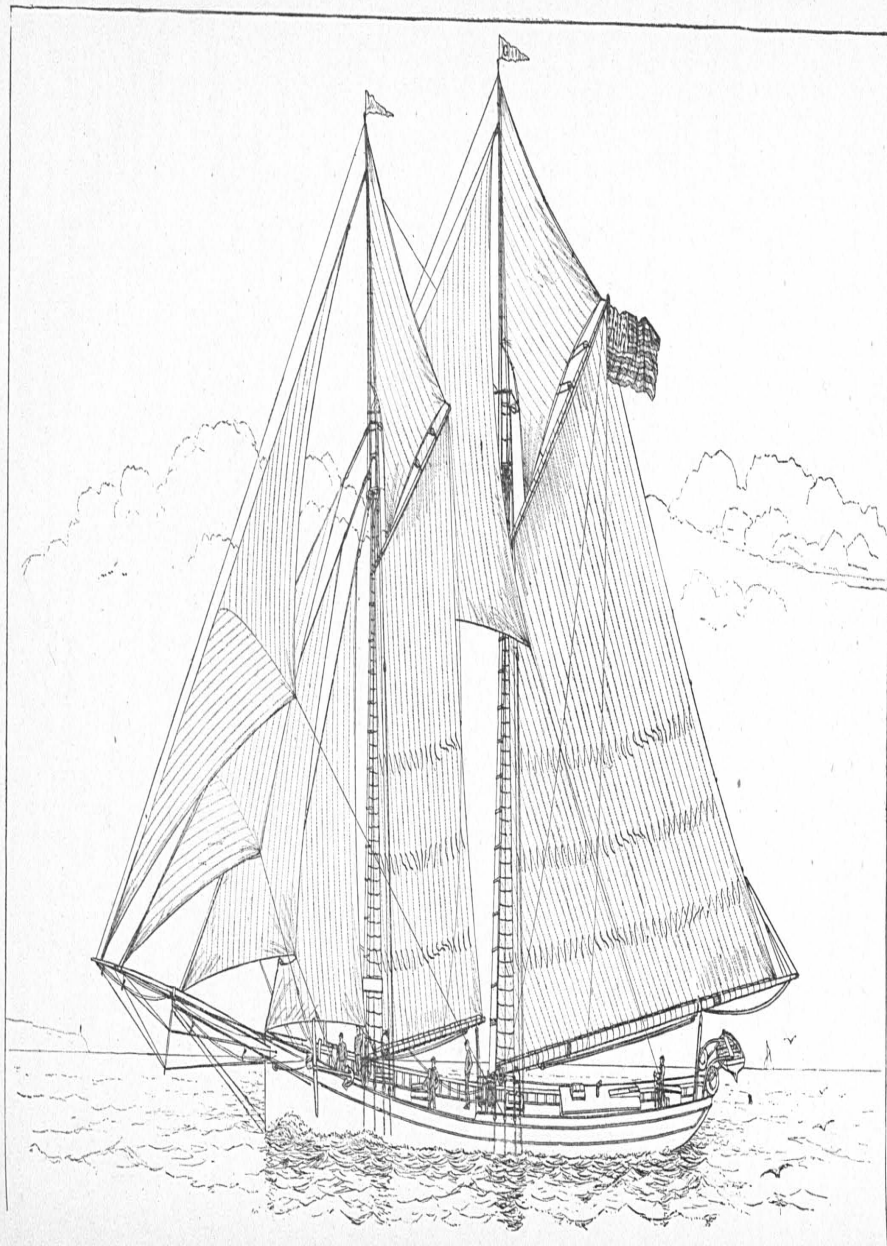
On July 30 the vessel left Baltimore, bound for Wood's Holl, reaching New York City on August 4 and Wood's Holl on August 9. On the 26th of August search was made in the neighborhood of Cox's Ledge for swordfish, without success. On August 26 proceeded, with the assistant commissioner on board, to Mattapoisett, Mass., to meet Gen. W. F. Smith. On the return trip to Wood's Holl, without any known cause, the shaft snapped and the propeller was lost. The vessel was then examined by a submarine diver, and the broken shaft removed. On September 7, with the assistance of a diver, the wheel was recovered from the channel. On September 14 the vessel was towed by the Fish Hawk to Bristol, R. I., and hauled up to Herreshoff Manufacturing Company's wharf. While waiting to be hauled out on the railway the crew was engaged in painting and cleaning. On October 1 the vessel was towed to Providence, R. I., and hauled out on the dry-dock for repairs.

On October 4 conveyed the assistant commissioner to Fall River. Later in the month trips were made to Newport, R. I.; New Bedford, Mass.; Noank, Conn.; and New London, Conn. At the latter place the assistant commissioner rejoined the vessel, and the compasses were tested by Lieutenants Waring and Scott, of the Albatross.

On October 25 the Halcyon, with the assistant commissioner on board, left Wood's Holl for Battery Station, where she arrived October 29 and remained until November 1. After this various trips were made to Baltimore, Saint Jerome, and Annapolis, at which latter point the assistant commissioner joined the ship.

In the early part of December the vessel got aground from dragging of anchor, and it was impossible to get afloat until the 9th, when the tugs Pacific and Champlin towed her to Havre de Grace. In endeavoring to get off, the condensing-pipe was broken. This necessitated going to Baltimore for repairs, where she remained alongside of Skinner & Son's railway wharf until the close of the year.

BALTIMORE, MD., *January 4, 1887.*



THE GRAMPUS.