

CAPE ANN Museum

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CAPTAIN BEN PINE PAPERS

Creator:	Captain Ben Pine
Dates:	1920-1951
Quantity:	3.5 linear feet (7 manuscript containers, 1 scrapbook, 1 logbook, 1 motion picture reel, 23 glass plate negatives, photographs)
Acquisition:	Accession #: 200.2 ; Donated by: Gloucester Fisherman's Institute, care of Julian Hatch, June 1995.
Identification:	A08 ; Archive Collection #08
Citation:	[Document Title]. The Captain Ben Pine Papers, [Box #, Folder #, Item #], Cape Ann Museum Library & Archives, Gloucester, MA.
Copyright:	Requests for permission to publish material from this collection should be addressed to the Librarian/Archivist.
Language:	English
Finding Aid:	Howard Thomas, Sept. 1999; supervised, Ellen Nelson, archivist. Reprocessed by Amber L. Wingerson, Curatorial Assistant, 2019.

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Biographical Note

Captain Ben Pine was born at Belloram, Newfoundland on September 10, 1883, the son of Owen and Sarah (Cluett) Pine. He came to Gloucester at the age of ten and shortly thereafter started working around the wharves. For many years he went fishing out of Gloucester in the dory haddocking business and winter fishing on the Banks of the North Atlantic. In 1922, along with several other Gloucester business men, he formed the Atlantic Supply company at 33 Rogers Street opposite Porter Street.

The Atlantic Supply Company outfitted fishing vessels including mackerel seiners, dory haddockers, halibuters, swordfishermen and, in later years, the modern diesel-powered druggers. Captain Pine also owned and invested in many of the fishing schooners including the famed *Columbia* and *Gertrude L. Thebaud* and the more modern druggers *Puritan* and *Pilgrim*.

It was the International Fisherman's Races that focused nation-wide attention on Captain Pine and thrust him into international prominence. In 1923, he skippered the *Columbia* in its victory over the Nova Scotia *Bluenose* Skippered by Captain Angus Walters. In 1930, Captain Pine skippered the *Gertrude L. Thebaud*, the last racing fisherman ever built, in a win over *Bluenose* but this race ended in bitter dispute. In 1931 and 1938, the *Thebaud* and *Bluenose* met in further series of races that also wound up in dispute rather than a clear-cut victory.

When Gloucester and the fishing industry was in the throes of the depression, Captain Pine, in April 1933, sailed the *Thebaud* to Washington D.C. On board with him was a delegation composed of business leaders and schooner captains to plead the cause of the Gloucester fisheries to President Franklin D. Roosevelt. The *Thebaud* was met at the dock by President Roosevelt and Captain Pine was hosted at the White House. Later President Roosevelt sailed into Gloucester Harbor in the sailing yacht *Amberjack* and Captain Pine was invited aboard the craft as a guest. He presented the President with an oil painting of the *Thebaud* painted by Gloucester artist Emile Gruppe, which later hung in the White House.

In August 1933, Captain Pine arranged for the *Thebaud* to sail to the Century of Progress Exposition in Chicago as the official exhibition of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. The purpose of the *Thebaud* exhibit was to promote the interests of the fishing industry.

Throughout his life, Captain pine was a major influence to the City of Gloucester and its fishing industry. He was always interested in youth and provided the funds for the beautiful marine room at the local YMCA. The paintings were done by artist Larry O'Toole. Captain Pine helped many young fishermen to get started on the path to commanding a fishing vessel. His humanitarianism is best illustrated by his organizing the *Columbia/Avalon* fund to aid the widows, children and other dependents of the lost crewmen of the two ill-fated schooners.

Captain Pine suffered from a heart condition in his later years and had to curtail his commercial activities but he never lost his keen interest and dedication to Gloucester and the fishing industry. He died at his home, 24 Wonson Street, Rocky Neck, on February 23, 1953.

Acquisition Note

An anonymous donor originally gave the Ben Pine papers to the Gloucester Fisherman's Institute. When the Institute was dissolved, Julian Hatch gave the papers to the Cape Ann Historical Association courtesy of Martha Oaks. Received June 1995.

Scope and Content of the Collection

This collection provides a unique insight into the business world of Captain Ben Pine, renowned Gloucester fisherman and internationally known racing skipper. He was a real Gloucesterman famed for his sailing ability and participation in the International Fishermen's Races.

The collection was received from the Gloucester Fishermen's Institute where it had been stored in three cardboard boxes for some years. There was no organization of the material comprising the collection; each box contained a variety of newspaper clippings, correspondence, brochures and pamphlets, photographs, glass plate negatives and other items generally related to Ben Pine and his position of national prominence in the fishing industry. For example, some of the newspaper clippings were pasted in scrapbooks while others were loosely scattered throughout the material, many without date or publication data. While some of the photographs were in good condition, many others were creased, curled or in deteriorating condition.

We have arranged the correspondence and telegrams in subject series and, as appropriate, in an alphabetical and/or chronological arrangement within each series.

Series Description

- I. Series I Schooner Races
 - a. Correspondence, General 1920-1939
 - b. Telegrams, 1921-1941
 - c. Race Programs and other printed material, 1922-1938
 - d. Crew List and Expenses of the *Gertrude L. Thebaud*
 - e. Miscellaneous
- II. Series II *Columbia/Avalon* Fund
 - a. Correspondence to and from Recipients
 - b. Contributions, Disbursements, and Miscellaneous
- III. Series III Chicago Exposition
 - a. General Correspondence, 1933- May, 1937

- b. Resolution, Work Notes and Miscellaneous
 - c. Expenses and Employment Agreements
 - d. Log of the *Thebaud*
 - IV. Series IV Washington D.C. Trip
 - V. Series V Personal Material
 - a. Correspondence, General 1930-1942
 - b. Ephemera
 - VI. Series VI Schooner *Gertrude L. Thebaud*
 - a. Correspondence, Louis and Gertrude Thebaud
 - b. Schooner *Gertrude L. Thebaud* Miscellaneous
 - VII. Series VII Schooner *Columbia*
 - VIII. Series VIII Draggers *Pilgrim* and *Puritan*
 - IX. Series IX Angus Walters/Schooner *Bluenose*
 - X. Series X Photographs
 - XI. Series XI Scrapbook
-

Container List

Box 1

Series I Schooner Races

A. Correspondence, General 1920-1939

Correspondence is arranged by year and date. The early years (1920-1929) primarily consist of correspondence of Wilmot A. Reed, Secretary of American Fishermen's Race Committee, Gloucester, MA., and relates to the controversy over the disqualification of the *Mayflower* for failure to conform to Letter of Deed requirements; arrangements for press coverage of the races; fund raising and requests for assistance of U.S. Navy vessels in conducting the races. The later years (1930-1939) contain correspondence primarily related to Capt. Ben Pine and the International Fishermen's Races between the *Gertrude L. Thebaud* and the *Bluenose*.

Folder 1 1920-1921

Folder 2 1922

Folder 3 1923-1937

Folder 4 Feb. 15 – Sept. 16 1938

Folder 5 Sept. 20 – Dec. 31 1938+1939

Box 2

Series I Schooner Races

Folder 1

B. Telegrams, 1921 – 1941

Contents of telegrams generally relate to the era of the International Fishermen's Races between Gloucester and Nova Scotia in the 1920s and 1930s. The telegrams for 1930 contain a series of bulletins highlighting the position and time of each schooner throughout the race.

Folder 2

C. Race Programs and other printed materiel, 1922-1938

Contains important material relative to the Schooner Races:

1. Programs for the races off Gloucester, 1922, 1926, 1927, 1930, 1938.
2. Programs for the races off Boston and Gloucester, 1922, and off Halifax, NS, 1931.
3. Conditions of Deed of Gift for Schooner Races established by the *Halifax Herald* in 1921.
4. Pamphlet for International Fishermen's Race of 1938 with list of committees and members, history of the races, photographs of Capts. Ben Pine and Walters, and diagram of course and distances.

Folder 3

D. Crew list and Expenses of the *Gertrude L. Thebaud*

Included is a crew list of the *Thebaud* and a list of expenses to recondition the *Thebaud* for races in 1930, 1931, 1938.

Folder 4

E. Miscellaneous

Box 3

Series II *Columbia/Avalon* Fund

A. Correspondence to and from recipients 1927-1929 arranged alphabetically.

Folder 1 A-H

Folder 2 J-W

The *Columbia/Avalon* was established by the American Fishermen's Race Committee to provide for the dependents of those who lost their lives in two tragic sea disasters. On July 29, 1927 the schooner *Avalon* was rammed by a trans-Atlantic liner and all hands but three were lost. On August 24, 1927 the schooner *Columbia*, in the midst of a raging hurricane, was lost off Sable Island and her entire crew perished. Capt. Ben Pine and his business associate Ray Adams, assumed major roles in raising money for, and managing, the fund.

This series contains correspondence between members of the *Columbia/Avalon* Fund committee and dependents of the lost crews. It also includes correspondence from schools and other agencies regarding recipients and with the American Consular Service and Registrar General, Halifax, NS

Folder 3

B. Contributions, Disbursements, and Misc.

Correspondence with the American Consular Service in Halifax, NS, regarding the loss of the *Columbia* and the office of the Registrar General of NS. Also included are the names of contributors to the Fund; lists of dependents of crew; disbursements made; summary reports of visits made to the homes of dependents by Committee members; and other disparate items.

Series III Chicago Exposition

A. General Correspondence 1933-1937

Folder 4 March- July 1933

Folder 5 Aug. 1933- May, 1937 plus telegrams

This series consists of general correspondence from 1933-1937 and telegrams from June to October 1933. It is arranged chronologically and primarily relates to action by the Legislature

authorizing the *Thebaud* to sail to Chicago as Massachusetts' representative at the Century of Progress Exposition; preparations for the trip; arrangements to navigate the various canals and Great Lakes; activities at the Exposition; return trip and payments of expenses.

Box 4

Folder 1

- B. Resolution, Work Notes and Miscellaneous relating to the trip to the Chicago Exposition including:
 1. Resolution of the Legislature authorizing the *Thebaud* to be the Massachusetts' representative at the Exposition.
 2. Crew and guest lists.
 3. Newspaper articles including humorous accounts of bureaucratic red tape whereby the *Thebaud* was initially classified as a steamboat and Capt. Ben Pine was ruled not qualified to be the skipper.

Folder 2

- C. Expenses and Employment Agreements

Includes employment agreements for the crew; work agreements for the Sea Scouts; list of bills and expenses.

Wrapped on shelf.

- D. Log of the *Thebaud* July 27 to Oct. 17, 1933.

Series IV Washington D.C. Trip

Folder 3

General Correspondence, List of Attendees , Souvenir of *Akron*

This series is composed of general correspondence from April 1933 to February 1934. It is arranged chronologically and relates to Capt. Ben Pine who sailed the *Thebaud* to Washington, DC in April 1933. On board with him was a delegation of business leaders and schooner captains. The purpose of the trip was to highlight the depressed condition of the New England fishing industry and to ask Congress for a higher tariff on imported fish. The *Thebaud* was met at the dock by President Roosevelt and the delegation was hosted at the White House. The series also contains a list of persons on board the *Thebaud* for the trip and, inexplicably, a souvenir of the Akron dated April 23, 1933.

Series V Personal Correspondence and Personal Ephemera

Folder 4

- A. Correspondence, general 1930-1942

Arranged chronologically.

Folder 5 Personal Ephemera

Folder 6 Personal Ephemera

- B. Personal Ephemera collected by Capt. Ben Pine

Some of the more significant items are:

1. Gloucester Fishermen's Institute Annual Reports for 1938, 1939, 1940, 1942.
2. Shipping Articles of the vessel *Raymonde*.

3. 1852 Day Book and Cash Book of Burnham Hardy of 18 State St., Boston.
4. Copy of Outfits of Schooner *Volunteer*, Feb. 1, 1898.
5. Central Wharf & Vessel Co. Profit & Loss Statement, Dec. 31, 1933.
6. List of vessels built by Moses Adams and A.D. Story, 1872-1932.
7. Small scrapbook of clippings on mackerel landings and prices from 1902, 1905, 1906.
8. Organization Plan for Gloucester Fishery Exhibit in the International Fishery Exhibition, New York World's Fair, 1939.

Box 5

Folder 1 Newspaper Clippings

Folder 2 Newspaper Clippings

Folder 3 Miscellaneous

Box 6

Series VI Schooner *Gertrude L. Thebaud*

Folder 1

- A. Correspondence, Louis and Gertrude Thebaud Letters 1929-1936 and Telegrams 1930-1939

The correspondence is arranged chronologically. The early correspondence, 1929-1930, relates to the arrangement for the financing and building of the *Thebaud* and the 1930 Fishermen's Race off Gloucester in which the *Thebaud* beat the *Bluenose*. However, this was not considered an 'International Fishermen's Race' and therefore the International Cup was not presented to the winner. The later correspondence is general and includes invitations to the Thebaud family to sail on her and discussions about subsequent schooner races.

Folder 2

- B. Schooner *Gertrude L. Thebaud* Miscellaneous

This consists of general correspondence from Feb. 11 to Oct. 30, 1930. It is arranged chronologically and relates to the purchase of shares in the *Thebaud*. She was designed by Frank E. Paine of Boston and built at the Arthur D. Story yard in Essex, MA. She was launched on March 17, 1930. Her construction was largely financed by Louis A. Thebaud of New Jersey and named for his wife.

It contains the following of note:

1. Invitations for the launching of the *Thebaud* on March 17, 1930.
2. Measurements and sail plan.
3. Photographs of the *Thebaud* in Gloucester harbor.
4. Schedule of rates for excursion trips.
5. Crew list of the *Thebaud* bound for Canadian Arctic June 24, 1937.
6. Clippings – *Thebaud* in Coast Guard in WWII and memorialized in a stained glass window in St. Jon's Episcopal Church, Gloucester.
7. Photo of the *Thebaud* lost at La Guayra, Venezuela Feb 6, 1948.

8. Negatives of Christmas Cards with pictures of *Thebaud* and other vessels owned by Capt. Ben Pine.
9. *The Sea Breeze*, Oct. 1948, published by Boston Seaman's Friend Society with article about the loss of the *Thebaud* written by Edmund F. Moran.

Series VII Schooner *Columbia*

Folder 3 Miscellaneous plus calendar

This series includes material relating to both the schooner *Columbia* and the schooner-type dragger *Columbia* built in 1942. There is a letter from the owners of the schooner *Columbia* to the American Fishermen's Race Committee advising of the availability of the *Columbia* to be the American contender in the race. Other items of note:

1. Measurements.
2. Print of building plan, Burgess & Paine, Boston, MA.
3. Newspaper article, *Halifax Herald*, Oct. 31, 1924 on loss of the *Columbia*
4. Calendar for the year 1951 with sketches by Larry O'Toole of vessels including "Capt. Ben Pine's *Columbia*."
5. Atlantic Fisherman article, Sept. 1942, "*Columbia*, Modern Schooner-type Dragger."
6. Article of launching of dragger *Columbia* at Essex, MA
7. Three photographs and prints of *Columbia*, old and new.

Series VIII Draggers *Pilgrim* and *Puritan*

Folder 4

Contains two small photos of the *Pilgrim*; *Fishing Gazette* article, Aug. 1943, about Capt. Ben Pine building two new draggers, *Puritan* and *Pilgrim*; *Atlantic Fisherman* article, Oct. 1944, of the launching of the *Pilgrim*.

Series IX Angus Walters/Schooner *Bluenose*

Folder 5 General correspondence from 1936 to 1946.

Arranged chronologically it includes a few letters from Capt. Walters to Capt. Pine about selling the *Bluenose*, the fishing industry in general, claims for reimbursement, schooner races, and letters from E. Fenwick Zwicker of the *Bluenose* Schooner Co. Ltd.

Also: a pamphlet *The Story of the Bluenose*, published by Lunenburg Exhibitors Ltd., 1933; newspaper articles; measurements; *Bluenose* crew list.

Box 7

Series X Photographs

- 23 Glass plate negatives in separate storage, scanned images in Box 7
- One box of prints of ships, waterfront, etc., some damaged.
- A reel of 16mm movie film in separate storage

Series XI Scrapbook

Schooner races, the *Thebaud*, the Chicago Expo, etc. Wrapped on shelf.