

# FEDERAL AID ENLISTED TO RID SHORE OF SHARK MENACE

**President Wilson, Secretary Tumulty and Secretary McAdoo, All With Summer Residences Here, Interested In Situation. Three U. S. Departments Now Cooperating---Cutter May Patrol Coast.**

## SEVERAL SEA WOLVES CAPTURED YESTERDAY

With President Wilson, Secretary of the Treasury McAdoo and the president's secretary, Joseph P. Tumulty, all of whom have their summer residences in this vicinity, interested in the campaign to rid the Jersey coast of the shark menace that has resulted in the loss of four lives during the last two weeks, the local authorities of the coast resorts are greatly encouraged in the belief that some effectual method now will be devised. Three federal departments are cooperating to this end. They are the treasury department, the bureau of fisheries and the coast guard service.

Secretary Tumulty, whose summer home is in this city, yesterday telegraphed The Press that he would be glad to do anything in his power to aid in the campaign. It is believed likely that a revenue cutter will be sent today to patrol the shore and attempt to hunt and capture the sharks.

Superintendent John E. Cole of the Fifth district of the Federal Coast Guard service, who has his office in the postoffice building here, was called out this telephone yesterday by Captain Commandant Hertholt, chief of the patrol, from Washington, and asked what it was possible for the coast guard to do. Superintendent Cole reported that there appeared no means to be of any use which the men could aid.

The coast guard service is under the treasury department and the patron of Commandant Hertholt was taken at Secretary McAdoo's direction.

Supt. Cole said this morning that only the keepers of the various beaches are on duty here the month of July. All the members of the patrol being on leave of absence. "But these men could be quickly brought back to their work if it is found they can be of any service," he declared.

"Nevertheless," he continued, "I would not recommend this course, because I fail to see what good they could do. This is an entirely new situation and how to cope with it I don't know. There have always been quantities of sharks along the coast here, but this is the first time that anyone has ever been attacked by one on the coast of Jersey that I have ever heard of."

"But the fact that the attacks are but occasional and widely separated makes it impossible for the coast guard to do anything to alleviate the situation."

Nobody knows where the next attack is likely to occur. The Jersey coast from Sandy Hook to Cape May is 100 miles long, and sharks are likely to appear anywhere from Cape May to Montauk Point, L. I."

### Prefer Steel Nets.

Supt. Cole said he regarded the placing of steel nets around the bathing grounds an effectual protection. "Where there are no nets," he added, "the best way to keep from getting bit is to keep out of the water. I wouldn't go in."

Efforts to capture the sharks believed to have been cooped up in the Mutawan creek were continued throughout yesterday and again today. But the lack on the part of the local authorities of proper facilities to handle the situation has interfered with their effectiveness. With the finding yesterday morning of the stillwell boy's body interest in the search for the sharks lagged noticeably.

Governor Fielder at San Gray yesterday received a letter from the Waterman chamber of commerce suggesting that bounties be offered for the capture of sharks at the following rates: 100-pound shark, \$2; 200-pound shark, \$5; 300-pound shark, \$10; 400-pound shark, \$20; 500-pound shark, \$50. The governor had previously said that the cost of such a step would be prohibitive.

The town of Mutawan has offered a reward of \$100 for the capture of a shark eaten. An offer was made yesterday by the mayor of Wildwood of \$1,000 reward for every annual shark caught in the vicinity of that place. The offer is considered safe since there is no way of proving that a shark is a

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# FEDERAL AID GIVEN TO RID SHORE OF SHARK MENACE

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Man-eater unless human flesh were found in his stomach.

## Coast Guards May Aid.

WASHINGTON, July 15.—Tragic stories of attacks by sharks upon bathers along the New Jersey coast were discussed at yesterday's meeting of the cabinet.

Later William G. McAdoo, secretary of the treasury, announced that the coast guard service would be ordered to do what it could toward clearing the coast of the dangerous fish, and preventing further loss of life.

Instructions were sent by the treasury department both to the coast guard cutters and life saving stations. No definite plan of action has been worked out, but the idea is to have the service aid in locating and killing sharks and when possible warn resorts of their proximity.

William C. Redford, secretary of commerce told his cabinet that the bureau of fisheries had been unable to offer any scientific explanation of the unprecedented attacks upon human beings.

## Resolution in House.

A resolution was introduced in the house yesterday by Representative Bacharach of New Jersey, authorizing department of commerce to cooperate with state authorities in an effort to exterminate the sharks, and appropriating \$5,000 for the purpose.

A formal statement made public by H. J. Moore, acting commissioner of the fisheries bureau, said the bureau experts reluctantly had been compelled to come to the conclusion that no certainly effective preventative measures could be recommended, but advised a shark-catching campaign, and warned bathers to stay in shallow water. Attention was called to the small number of attacks compared with the vast array of bathers, with the suggestion that there appeared to be no reason for panic among the people at seaside resorts.

Assistant Secretary Newton said today that the coast guard fleet would undertake to establish whether there actually were large schools of sharks menacing the Jersey coast or whether only a few particularly voracious fish had made their way north alone. A cutter probably will be ordered immediately to the waters where sharks have been seen, with a view of baiting and destroying the fish if there seem to be only a few.

Captain Berthor, commandant of the coast guard, said it was hoped it would not be necessary to stop bathing along the coast, even temporarily. Navy cutter officers, experienced in the shark infested waters of the West Indies, will find a way to end the shark menace along the Jersey shore, he predicted.

compelled to come to the conclusion that no certainly effective steps can be recommended.

The most reasonable and the most obvious suggestion is that an effort be made to catch the sharks, either by trolling from boats or by means of baited shark hooks, buoyed to within two or three feet of the surface and securely attached by stout lines to anchored buoys or barrels at intervals of 100 or 200 yards outside of the life-lines. This would serve the double purpose of catching the predatory fish and of giving warning of their presence in a particular locality.

There are always a few sharks off the coast, particularly in summer, but the recent deplorable tragedies are entirely unprecedented in temperate waters, altho the bureau has had reliable reports of similar occurrences in the tropics.

There are no "man-eaters" in the sense of implying exclusive or constant addiction to a diet of human flesh. The sharks as a whole are voracious flesh eaters, living particularly on live flesh, but ready to eat any animal matter, dead or alive. Under stress of hunger they become quite bold, and while it is impossible to make a positive statement to that effect, it is probable that a few individuals, temporarily deprived of their ordinary food, have been driven by stress of circumstances to attack prey which ordinarily they would avoid.

While the recent tragedies are appalling from their very nature and despite unusual fear and horror by reason of their unexpectedness and the ferocity of the attacks, they are few in number compared with the vast army of bathers. If the experience of a long series of years be of any value, the probability of a recurrence of these attacks is remote, and there appears to be no reason for a feeling of panic among those at our seaside resorts.

If, however, any warning is necessary in addition to the general publicity which has been given to these tragedies, it may be stated that for the time being bathers should keep in shallow water, inside the breakers, and away from lulls and channels.

## Many Sharks Reported.

SEASIDE PARK, July 15.—A number of sharks were reported in Barnegat bay, where members of a boating party believe that James Ridgely had a narrow escape from a man-eater. Alderman William C. Wilson of Newark and James L. Toole, who were in a motorboat fishing near the shore, shouted to Ridgely, who was treading water, that a shark was near him. Ridgely swam swiftly to the boat and got there safely. Just as he entered the boat a big fish appeared in his wake, according to Alderman Wilson.

Captain and officers of Atlantic liners report seeing numbers of sharks from 15 to 25 feet long between Cape Hatteras and Sandy Hook, which is far out of the waters which sharks ordinarily haunt.

## Several Caught.

MATRAWAN, July 14.—While the sharks which have been seen in Matrawan creek, where two bathers were killed and one maimed on Wednesday, have not been scouted so far by the intensive hunt for them in the narrow stream, several large sharks were caught yesterday along the New Jersey coast not far from the mouth of the creek, and in waters near Long Island.

One or more of the man-eaters may be among them. Cutting them open is not likely to show whether they have attacked men. In only one of the cases has a shark removed a limb from a victim, and then it is believed that the fish took only the flesh. Their jaws and teeth are not strong enough to bite thru bone, according to students of shark bone, tho they are able, as in the case of George Miller, to take off a leg. A shark can do this by ripping the flesh away from the bone and snapping the bone with a sting of its head.

The body of Lester Sillwell, the 10-year-old boy whose body disappeared after a shark attacked him in Matrawan creek on Wednesday, was found to be bitten in seven places, after it rose to the surface yesterday. The shark at each bite had ripped away flesh, but his teeth had only scraped the bones. Four of the bites were on the body, two on the left leg and one on the right.

## Mouth 14 Inches Wide.

An examination of the body of Stanley Fisher, who was mortally bitten in Matrawan creek on the same day, showed that the teeth of the shark had clinched on the bone of his right thigh, but had glarized off, leaving several scratches. A measurement of the wound showed that the distance between the teeth on the left and on the right side of the shark's mouth was 14 inches, indicating that the man-eater was probably considerably more than nine feet in length, which is the estimate of those who saw it.

## MOUTH OF THOSE WHO SAW IT.

## Shark Caught in Bluefish Net.

The biggest shark caught yesterday was one measuring more than eight feet and weighing 350 pounds which was taken by Captain Paul Terronov and a crew of three men after a long struggle about a mile off Belkoff, N. J. The shark had followed a school of bluefish into the net and got himself entangled by the time the fishermen began to haul in. The fish thrusted furiously, but was stunned with clubs and boat-hooks and finally lifted into the boat. Twelve small sharks were found in the stomach. The shark was of a bluish color with a white belly, the type usually found in those waters. It was of the man-eating variety, in the opinion of fishermen and sailors who insist that the recent attacks were made by ordinary sharks grown desperate thru shortage of food.

John Carlson, a fisherman at Seabright, reported that he had a battle with a shark 10 feet long about three miles off the coast. Carlson and his partner asserted that the monster jumped 20 feet out of the water. They said they stabbed him several times with harpoons and fought with him for an hour, but he got away.

There was much shooting and harpooning at sharks in Matrawan creek yesterday. All day there were shouts of "Shark!" from parties in rowboats and on shore. Rifle firing and spearing followed, but no sharks were taken. When it was thought that the shark had eluded pursuit by hiding at the bottom of a deep hole, Chief L. S. Erasmus of the fire department of Matrawan would be summoned to set off a blast of dynamite. This was done repeatedly, but resulted only in killing a few small fish. This practice was disapproved yesterday by Dr. F. A. Lucas, director of the American Museum of Natural History, who thought that it did not endanger the sharks, but would

### Sharks Still in the Creek.

Circumstantial evidence, in addition to that of many eyewitnesses, that sharks were still in the creek was offered yesterday by the condition of one of the three wire nets stretched across the stream. It was found twisted and pulled loose from its moorings, as if a shark had broken thru.

John D. Dunn, the 12-year-old boy who was bitten in the left leg on Wednesday in Minnow creek, is getting better in St. Peter's hospital, New Brunswick. No infection has set in, and the leg will probably be saved, altho the boy is likely to walk with a limp. The shark's teeth dragged his flesh away from both sides of the laceration from the knee to the ankle, but did not sever a tendon or destroy an important muscle. Young Dunn told the nurse yesterday that sharks were swarms after all because the one which bit his left leg had let go and let when he kicked and splashed with his right.

"I am proud to know that my son sacrificed his life in trying to save the life of another," Captain Watson Fisher, father of the shark victim, said last evening to a reporter. "I would have kept the same thing. Of course, it is a great loss to us, but we take comfort in knowing that Stanley played the part of a man."

### Never Saw Shark Attack Man.

Captain Fisher was formerly one of the steamship commanders of the Hawaiian line, now retired. He and Mrs. Fisher, the mother, Mrs. Augusta Nichols, sister of Stanley, arrived at Minnow yesterday at 10 o'clock from Minneapolis.

"It seems impossible to think that a shark came up this small creek and killed my boy," he said, standing on the veranda of the Fisher home at Minnow and looking down the valley toward the scene of the tragedy. "Think of it! For 36 years I was on the seas in different parts of the world, and during that time I've seen millions of sharks. Yet I never saw one attack a man and I never know of an authentic report of such an attack."

"In South American waters and around the West Indies sharks are as plentiful as rainbows. I've been all over these waters for years and never saw or heard of an attack by one of them upon a man. If somebody had told me this story I wouldn't have believed it."

"There is no doubt now that my son was attacked while pulling the boy away from the shark."

Mrs. Nichols said both Captain Fisher and his wife had been greatly shocked by the news of Stanley's death. The first telegram that came to them in Minneapolis was that he had met a fatal accident. When they arrived in Chicago the next morning Captain Fisher learned the truth from the newspapers.

NEW YORK, July 14.—Dr. F. A. Lucas, director of the American Museum of Natural History, the great authority on sharks in this country, said yesterday that he did not know how to account for the sudden appearance of man-eaters in local waters. The work of these sharks, which has overthrown many of the theories of scientists on the subject, emphasized, he said, the fact that comparatively little was known about sharks and makes timely the suggestion that an expedition be fitted out to study them in tropical waters.

Beyond the use of wire netting and the hunting of man-eaters, Dr. Lucas said he knew of no remedy for the shark scourge. He said that he could advise fathers of no way to defend themselves except to frighten the sharks.

Dr. Lucas said there had been some misinterpretations of his expressions as to the habits of sharks. He did not say that sharks never attack men—but only said such attacks were rare. His studies, he said, had revealed only one fairly well authenticated case in a great many years, and in that instance the man was not killed.

### Calls This Shark Year.

"The moment I can come to account for the sudden preyings of these fishes," he went on, "is to say that this is a 'shark year' just as we have bumper years and army worm years."

"As for the theory that some have advanced that a school of giant turtles has been steam-rolled into these waters and is responsible for the devastation, the nature of the injuries to the victims disproves of that supposition. Quills have no such tearing apparatus as would be needed to do the ripping and cutting the bodies of the victims show."

"The shark, on the other hand, has powerful, sharp serrated teeth, which inflict the ugliest of wounds. Swords or spears made of these teeth, which one finds in the New Hebrides, are so sharp it is difficult even to handle them without cutting one's self. The shark's teeth, while their several rows are powerful and dangerous, are not well set. For this reason there are usually several pulled out when a shark takes the hook."