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Abstract Title: Ridding the Ocean of “Sea Vermin”: Twentieth Century Shark Fishing of the North Carolina Coast

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Abstract Description: In 1917, Alfred Ehrenreich, a businessman from New Jersey, launched the Ocean Leather Company in Morehead City, North Carolina. Alongside stakeholders like Russell Coles and Theodore Roosevelt, Ehrenreich hired local fishermen to catch shark for his main factory located in Bogue Sound. Shark leather was prized for wallets, upholstery, boots, harnesses, and a variety of other consumer goods. Menhaden and shad fishermen from Carteret County built and utilized their small watercrafts to bait, trap, and capture massive sand tiger, bull, nurse, hammerhead, and even great white sharks. The purpose of this research is to explore methods local fishermen used to hunt sharks, examine the vessels used for shark fishing, and identify individuals and companies involved in promoting and developing the industry during early 20th century. The author examines primary source documents, newspaper accounts, historic maps, and images