

COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS,

COUNTY OF ESSEX, SS.

GLOUCESTER, Sept. 1st, 1877.

Then personally appeared John P. Hutchinson, above named, who made oath, that all the above statements by him subscribed are true, to the best of his knowledge and belief, before me,

DAVID W. LOW,

Notary Public.

(L.S.)

No. 267.

GLOUCESTER, Aug. 31, 1877.

I, James McIsaac, Master of the schooner *Lais*, of Port Hawkesbury, Nova Scotia, on oath do depose and say, that I was born in Port Hastings, Strait of Canso, am 42 years of age, that I have been engaged in the fisheries for 18 years, just arrived from Grand Banks and Gulf of St. Lawrence from a codfish trip. I brought in 80,000 lbs. codfish; we took 50,000 lbs. on Grand Banks; the vessel sprung a leak, and we had to run in home. I, after my vessel was repaired, went on to bank Bradelle, in the Gulf of St. Lawrence, where I took 20,000 more of codfish, 25 miles from shore. I caught my bait for this trip off Prince Edward Island, about three miles off from shore; the bait I used was mackerel. It is the usual custom of the vessels from Nova Scotia, bound to the Banks codfishing, to buy bait from the shore people of Newfoundland and Nova Scotia; the average price of herring is about \$2 per barrel. I have paid as high as \$3.50 per barrel.

The market of the fishing vessels buying bait of the shore people is a very profitable one for the shoresmen, as they get more for their herring, selling them fresh, than any other way they can dispose of them. I have been to Newfoundland, to buy fresh herring, seven seasons, and when I first went there the people hardly had a net or a boat, and they were living very poorly; but now, owing to the herring trade with the American and other vessels, they are prosperous and are living in good style. They own boats and nets, and all of this prosperity is directly owing to this trade. There is no other market for these herring, and they would be useless if it were not for the market this trade affords. On the Banks, for a fresh trip, we first use herring to start us, and then, after the first fish are caught, we use the refuse fish for bait. I have caught four trips on the Banks without having any herring, and took squid on the Banks, and these squid, with the refuse, was all I used. I should say that if all the vessels would carry salt bait they would do full as well as they do now with herring. I think using fresh bait makes the fish dainty. The Provincetown vessels this year have done as well as any vessels with fresh bait; they using clams. I have never heard of any boats in the Bay being injured before the talk this year; but I have known the boats to flock around the American vessels to get the benefit of their bait, so that the vessels could not get a line into the water.

I have been in the Gulf of St. Lawrence 10 seasons mackereling, in American vessels; never with seines; always with the hook. The best season's work I ever made in the Bay was \$400 to a share. The poorest season was \$200. I have not been in the Bay for four years. Some years we get more inshore; some years get more offshore. I should say that one-half of the mackerel are, in my experience of hooking, taken inshore, viz.: within three miles. I never heard or knew of such a thing as fish cleanings hurting the fish; this is a new idea.

The American seiners have made a great deal of money in seining mackerel off their own coast; this I know, being where I could ascertain this fact.

The American cod and halibut fishery is a deep-sea fishery entirely.

Years ago a few trips were made up around Anticosti, but it is nothing to the great sea-fishing. Now they take all their fish on the Banks, off shore; none less than 12 miles off, and some 300 miles off.

JAMES McISAAC.

COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS.

COUNTY OF ESSEX SS.

GLOUCESTER, Aug. 31, 1877.

Then personally appeared the above named James McIsaac, and made oath that the above statement, by him subscribed, is true. Before me,

DAVID W. LOW,

Notary Public.

(L. S.)