

EVIDENCE TAKEN

BEFORE the Select Committee of the House of Commons appointed to enquire into and to report to this House upon all matters connected with the Boundaries between the Province of Ontario and the un-organized Territories of the Dominion with power to send for persons and papers.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,
COMMITTEE ROOM No. 8,
TUESDAY, 2nd March, 1880.

EVIDENCE.

The Committee met.—Mr. DAWSON occupied the Chair.

Colonel DENNIS was called and examined:—At the request of the Chairman he read his report to the Honorable the Minister of Justice on the Boundary Question, dated the 1st October, 1871.

REPORT OF COLONEL DENNIS.

OTTAWA, 1st October, 1871.

Remarks on the question of the boundary between the Province of Ontario and the Dominion Lands or North-West Territories.

1. The above limit is identical with the westerly boundary of the Province of Quebec as the same was fixed by the Quebec Act in 1774.

2. In describing the boundary of Quebec, in the act referred to, having commenced at the Bay of Chaleurs and continued westerly to the north-west angle of the Province of Pennsylvania, it goes on in the following language: "And thence along the western boundary of the said Province (Pennsylvania) until it strikes the River Ohio, and along the bank of the said river westward to the banks of the Mississippi, and northward to the southern boundary of the territory granted to the Merchant Adventurers of England trading to Hudson's Bay."*

3. The above phraseology (underlined), in describing the westerly boundary of Quebec, has been, and is still, interpreted in different ways according to the private opinions or prejudices of parties.

4. Those interested in locating the boundary of Ontario as far as possible to the west, argue that the term "*to the banks of the Mississippi and northward to the southern boundary of the territory, etc., etc.*," means that in going northward, the banks of the Mississippi are to be followed to its source, and that they were in fact so intended in the Act.

5. On the other hand it is contended, in the interest of the Dominion, that the language "*to the banks of the Mississippi,*" simply means to the banks of the said river at the point where it is joined by the Ohio, and the words which follow, "*and northward to the southern boundary, etc.,*" was intended to be construed as upon a *due north line*.

* See paper marked E annexed.