

APPENDIX G.

No. 1.

DOMINION OF CANADA,
PROVINCE OF PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND.

QUEENS COUNTY, to wit :

I, Alexander M. MacNeill, of Cavendish, in Prince Edward Island, farmer and fishermen, a Justice of the Peace for Queens County, Prince Edward Island, make oath and say

1. That I have been actively engaged in the fisheries off my farm at Cavendish, since the year 1851, and have personally carried on the fishing.

2. I have had three boats engaged fishing every season, employing seven hands besides myself, and at the same time cultivating my farm.

3. The first few years my catch was not very good owing greatly to the presence in such great numbers of the American fleet.

4. The numbers of this fleet throughout the Gulf—I don't know but I have often counted from my own shore over one hundred sail of American fishing vessels, and that within three miles of the shore.

5. I attribute the poor boat fishing of years gone by, during the Reciprocity Treaty, to the presence of the American fishing fleet.

6. Their custom was to the number of from sixty to one hundred sail, to harbour in Malpeque and then start out in the morning for the fishing grounds. If they saw a small boat taking mackerel they would steer straight for them, going to windward and drift down, throwing bait and either take the fish away or injure the boats. This was common for years and very largely and materially prejudiced the boat fishing.

7. During the past four or five years we have not been much annoyed with them. The British and Canadian cruisers had something to do with keeping them in order, and during the last two years only a small fleet has frequented the gulf.

8. The consequence has been that the catch by the boats has very largely increased, and also the number of fishing boats which has more than doubled during the past four years. Many new boats are being built, and my opinion is that their number will increase every year.

9. During the past nine years my catch would average about one hundred barrels each season, but I do not make a business of fishing. In fact I only prosecute it about two months in the season, combining fishing and farming.

10. I would think the number of fishing boats at Rustico harbours would number about one hundred and fifty.

11. My twenty years experience has proved to me that the best mackerel fishing around our coasts is about a mile from the shore in from seven to ten fathoms of water.

12. All the fish caught by the boats are taken within a mile of the coast, many of them within half a mile during the months of July and August, but during the months of September and October the boats take their catch further out, say two miles or two and a half. It is a very rare occasion that they go out three miles or beyond it.

13. Of the total catch in the boats, over nine tenths is caught well within the three-mile limit.

14. The American fishing fleet have always fished on the same ground as the boats, they go in as close and closer to our coast than half a mile, commence throwing over bait and drift off, taking fish with them off the shore, and when they lose the fish tack for the land again and renew operations. I can't say the proportion of their catch taken within the limit because they sometimes make a good catch outside in deep sea waters. The fleet have always fished within the three miles before the abolition of the Reciprocity Treaty and afterwards. They never gave up. The cruisers frightened them a little, but as soon as they were past the fishing vessels went right to work again and fished as before.

15. I prosecute the herring fishing in the Spring for bait, and get enough for that purpose, and to a small extent the codfishing, but my previous statements have entire reference to the mackerel fishery. The herring are all taken close to the shore.

Sworn to at Charlottetown, in Queens County, Prince Edward Island, this 18th day of June, A. D. 1877, before me,

ALEX. M. McNEILL.

E. JAMES SALMER,

*Commissioner for taking Affidavits in the Supreme Court, and
Notary Public for Prince Edward Island.*