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QUESTIONS RELATING TO MACKEREL, USED AT YARMOUTH AND LUNENBERG, N.S., MAY AND JUNE, 1895, BY WM. WAKEHAM AND R. RATHBUN.

When do the mackerel first strike this part of the coast? (Has he any records).

Describe the different schools that come in, and the size and period of each.

How far north do the spring mackerel strike in? (Maitland, St. Mary's Bay, Digby).

How do they strike the shore? Broad on, from the north, or how? What direction do they move? What evidence is there to show that they do not also move north?

How about movements at Pubnico, Barrington and Shelburne?

How far off Yarmouth do they take mackerel with gill nets? In what direction are those mackerel moving?

If mackerel are taken on the gill net grounds off shore, do they not move directly on the shore, and why should one trap interfere with the catch of another?

Do mackerel of the first or second run

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ever spawn here?

Do any mackerel run here in the summer and fall sizes?

How about St. Mary's Bay?

How about Digby and other places in Bay Fundy?

Where are brush weirs located in this part of Nova Scotia? For what are they set?

Are traps set specially for any fish but mackerel? No.

Description and sizes of traps.

Where are they located and number between Maitland and Shelburne?

When did they begin to use traps?

On what part of the coast do the traps do best fishing?

History of trap fishing, when were there most. How has reduction come about, and are the few now in use preferable to the larger number? Why?

What was used before traps?

History, sizes, mesh, etc., of seines?

How many were in use?

Where were seines used?

Did they make as good catches as traps?

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Why were they given up?

History of gill netting, when did they begin? What has been number at different times in past; and at present?

Description of gill nets.

Seasons.

Places where used.

Comparative quality of catch.

When was mackerel fishery first taken up in this region; what has been its general history? Has anything been published on the subject?

When did they begin to ship mackerel fresh? What did they do before that?

Can we obtain statistics of mackerel fishery here in Yarmouth?

Can we rely upon the reports of the Boston Fish Bureau?

What is salmon season in traps?

How many are taken here every spring?

What sizes do they run?

What is done with them?

To what river do they belong?

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Isn't there a large waste of small fish in the traps? Cod, pollock, etc. Could these not be thrown overboard in pursing the trap?

In all of this region are the poles to the traps always set in stones, or do they have soft bottom in places where they drive them?

What depth water should there be in the bowl at low tide.

Do they purse the traps early enough each season to know they are catching the first mackerel?

At what time are the traps taken up between Maitland and Shelburne?

If left in later than the mackerel season, for what purpose?

Are any mackerel gibbed or salted now in this region?

What has been the relative catch of mackerel during the past few years?

What causes yearly fluctuations in catch of mackerel?

Are mackerel as abundant as ever?

Does purse seining have any effect upon

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their abundance here? Or does it interfere with their fishery in any way?

Why isn't the Yarmouth Bar trap set on a point instead of in a cove?

What are the shipping ports for Boston? What territory is tributary to each?

At what places in Bay Fundy do spring mackerel occur?

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NORMAN J.B. TOOKER, OF A.F. STONEMAN & CO. YARMOUTH, N.S., MAY 28, 1895.

Interviewed by Wm. Wakeham and R. Rathbun (long hand)

Stoneman & Co. are interested in the traps about Yarmouth.

Bluff Head trap, as a whole, has been the most successful on this shore, due to the fact that the deeper water approaches the shore more closely here than where the other traps are located. The spring mackerel trim the shore in this region.

The present number of traps on the shore between Yarmouth Pt. and Maitland has been regulated by experience, and to increase the number would be ruinous. At one time there were many more, and some of them were only 1/8 of a mile apart, the shortest interval allowed by law, but they cut each other off on mackerel. The reduction in number was brought about by the owners themselves, whose interests were combined in those now set.

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The old license fee for traps here and elsewhere was \$40. Now they charge 50 cents a fathom for the leader. Some of the leaders are so long as to bring the fee up to \$80, which he thinks is unjust.

The traps which have been fished on the shore between Yarmouth Point and Maitland when they were most numerous, were located as follows:

Yarmouth Bar. - - - - -	4
Cheggogin Pt. - - - - -	1
Foot's Cove. - - - - -	1
Bluff Head. - - - - -	1
Just above Bluff Head. - - -	1
Sanford. - - - - -	3
Iron Mine. - - - - -	1
Robbins. - - - - -	1
Short Beach. - - - - -	1
Burn's Pt. - - - - -	1
County Line. - - - - -	1

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At one time there was a trap at Jeboque Pt., perhaps 8 years ago. The next is at Murder Island, and is there now. Thinks there was a short time at Harry's Island. There is now 1 at Pubnico Pt. Used to be 2.

Is not sure of the number between Murder Island and Cape Sable, but thinks there may be 10.

The first spring run of mackerel is generally large fish. Get the first in about all the traps at the same time, may be a day or two difference. Get only a few fish at first; they come scattering

along in the beginning. Last 10 to 12 days. Some years there are only 2, 3 or 4 days when the big fish run, and then the second run would come right after.

With the first run the headland traps do best. The other traps do better on the second. This year have had bigger fish than he ever knew of before.

The second run comes 3 or 4 days to a week after the first run ends.

Of the first run they make the bulk of their catch in the traps in the course of 3 or

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4 days.

As to the second run, they may, perhaps, get only a few fish in the first instance, and then may get several good runs in succession.

Thinks lobster pots keep the mackerel off, and account for their recent scarcity.

Second run strikes over the same extent of shore here as the first run.

John's Island traps have hitherto done better than the traps up this way (on first run), but not so far this year.

The large traps (two hearts) have better facilities for holding a large catch than those with 1 heart.

Probably 1 trap site is as good as another in the long run.

First and second spring runs are going eastward. They strike the west shore and move along it.

Some years they get very few fish on the first run, but does not remember that that run has ever failed altogether.

If there is an east wind, when the first run comes on, they may get very few fish.

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Southerly and westerly winds are best. Seem to blow them on the shore.

One flood tide off here will carry you as far into the Bay of Fundy as 2 ebb tides will carry you the other way.

Stop trap fishing about middle of July, sometimes a little earlier or later. The net gets fouled up after it has been in the water so long, and the least breeze will tear them.

Doesn't think there are more than scattering mackerel on this shore in the summer except in St. Mary's Bay.

Stonemen & Co. have a trap in St. Mary's Bay. Begin to get mackerel there between August 1 and 15, and they continue until perhaps October, but some years there are not many, last year, for instance. Mackerel are very capricious. May leave there suddenly and early.

Only 3 traps were set in St. Mary's Bay last year (1894), 3 or 4 years ago there were at least 8 there, 5 of which went up from here.

There are quite a number of weirs in St. Mary's bay, and they are pretty well up toward the head of the bay. They take mackerel,

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herring and shad.

Do not fish as many gills about here now as formerly; not  $\frac{1}{4}$  as many. Use them off Jeboque Pt., Yarmouth Bar, and some along the shore down to Cape Sable. As to distance from shore, they fish from back (inside) of the traps to 3 miles off shore.

Never saw any purse seiners off Yarmouth. Has no opinion regarding the effects of purse seining.

Traps are generally set only for mackerel. At John's Island they may leave them down during July and August for bait, and at that time there may also be some small mackerel which are taken.

All mackerel from about here, at whatever season taken, go fresh to Boston. The mackerel from the traps and weirs in St. Mary's Bay are also shipped fresh. Most of these go through Yarmouth; a few may go by way of St. John.

Does not know that they have any of the same kind of traps east of Cape Sable, but they have small floating traps around Lunenburg.

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Mackerel are much scarcer than they were formerly. When the trap at Yarmouth Bar was first set, they would catch as many there as they do now in all the traps west of Cape Sable. That was 15 years ago. Fish are now shy. Used to come right in shore. Attribute this to their being chased by the purse seiners.

There is no hooking done here now, except that they may fish hooks for small mackerel, tinkers, in Yarmouth Bay, in August. They do some hooking in St. Mary's Bay.

Drag seines have not been used here for a long time. May use some on Digby Neck shore.

The gill nets are 150 meshes deep, and are set at the surface. The mesh is 3, 3 ¼ and 3 3/8 inches, for the first run. Perhaps not large enough for the first run this year, but thinks reason why they are not catching more is that the mackerel may be swimming too low, and mostly go under the nets. This year the water has fished and the gill nets have made poor catches. The wind has been east most of the time. A 4 inch mesh would only be suitable for very large fish.

In June the gill net mesh used is 2 ¾ to

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3 inches. Not as much gilling is done in June as in May. In July the gilling is mostly for herring.

Could tell whether salmon made their appearance in the spring before the traps were set or not. There has been only a small catch of salmon in the traps this year, and never make a large catch that way. The salmon so taken do not belong to the Nova Scotia rivers. They differ in quality and in color of flesh; are better. Differ in shape and are of larger size. Are most abundant that last of May. In June they get very few. 30 lbs is a very large salmon for the traps, and an exceptional size. Take only 1 or 2 in a season.

Measure cod here from line connecting napes to end of flesh at beginning of tail. 22 inch cod are required for the American market.

He cannot say that cod and Pollock have become any scarcer.

The fishermen about here have hard work getting bait after the traps are taken up.

Have good runs of herring about here at

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certain seasons. Has seen them in the spring between the first and second runs of mackerel. Most herring are caught in September. About Robbin's Point is one of the best places, beginning just after the traps are taken up. Yarmouth Bar is also a good place. September herring are good, but not real fat. Thinks they spawn in August. About Mud Island, one of the Tusquets, is a spawning place. They are caught with gill nets.

The traps about here are set in time to take the first mackerel, so there is no question that the record of the first catch in the traps indicates their first appearance. The gill nets are put out earlier than the traps. Can tell very closely the time when the traps should be ready.

The salt mackerel noted as shipped from Yarmouth in Custom House records did not come from the catch directly about here. May have come from farther down east.

It is not the main body of mackerel which strikes the shore at Yarmouth. Only stray bodies which come a little too far west. The great body passes across Georges, and strikes

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much farther east.

They have mackerel traps in the bay at the lower or Atlantic entrance to the Gut of Canso.