

No. 611.

AFFIDAVIT OF THOMAS BLAKE.

IN THE MATTER OF the Enquiry into Newfoundland Territorial Rights on the Labrador.

Labrador, Snooks Cove, to wit :

[10 Sept.,
1909.]

I, THOMAS BLAKE, make oath and say as follows:—I live at Mulligan, about 20 miles below North West River, and about 120 miles from the sea coast. I was born in Hamilton Inlet about 66 years ago. My father, William Blake, was born and lived and died here in the Inlet. He was 52 years old when he died. His father, William Blake, came from Devonshire, England, as a young man in the pioneer days of the fishing vessels sent out from England to fish on the coast during the summer season. My grandfather, my father and myself have lived in Hamilton Inlet about 140 years. I have gone into the interior about 184 miles from my home and lived there during the winter season trapping and hunting. I come out in the spring and fish for trout and salmon. I have been doing that for over fifty years. We have owned and occupied the land where I now reside during my father's lifetime and my own. Although living so far up the Inlet and in the interior of the country (being about 220 miles from the coast) I have always considered myself a citizen of Newfoundland, as my father did before me. We have been subject to the laws of Newfoundland and have paid revenue to the Customs ever since the first Revenue Collector came on the Labrador. I remember when the Court was held here at Rigolet by Judge Sweetland and afterwards by Judge Pinsent. I paid revenue to the Collector of Customs, or Customs official, that came with these Judges. I have never had anything to do with the Government of Canada, and I have never obeyed or been asked to comply with any of its laws or rules or directions in connection with the interior of the country, the game laws or fishery laws, nor paid any tax or revenue to any official of the Government of Canada. I have always believed that the land that I have resided on, trapped over and used in the interior, was the Dominion of the Government of Newfoundland and always looked to the Governor and Government of Newfoundland as the rulers of the country. I never heard of any claim of Canada until four or five years ago, when there was a dispute between some of the trappers amongst our people and the Indians residing in the interior in connection with the fur ground, which the Indians claimed to have been their fathers and grandfathers and they now wish to exclude us. For the last year or so it has been getting more pronounced and this year I heard that they are threatening to shoot some of our settlers if they go in on their (the Indians) hunting grounds.

(Sgd) THOMAS L. BLAKE.

SWORN before me at Snooks Cove aforesaid
this 10th day of September A.D. 1909.

(Sgd) F. J. MORRIS,
Judge of the Court of Labrador