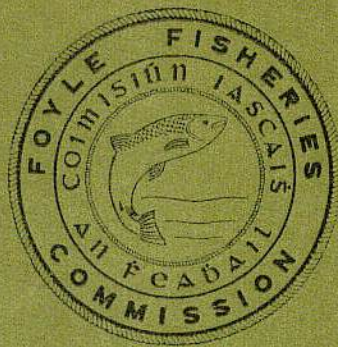


FOYLE FISHERIES COMMISSION

FIRST ANNUAL REPORT

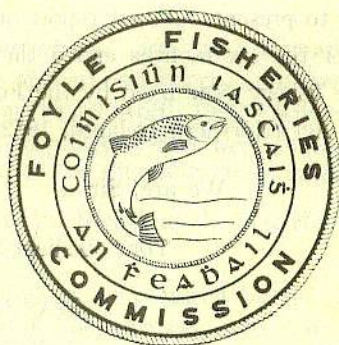


BELFAST
HER MAJESTY'S STATIONERY OFFICE

PRICE 1s. 0d. NET

FOYLE FISHERIES COMMISSION

FIRST ANNUAL REPORT



BELFAST

HER MAJESTY'S STATIONERY OFFICE

PRICE 1s. 0d. NET

TO THE RT. HON. W. V. MCCLEERY, J.P., M.P.
Minister of Commerce for Northern Ireland.

SIR,

We have the honour to present our first report on the work of the Foyle Fisheries Commission for the six months ended the 30th September, 1952, the terminal date of the fishery year fixed by the Foyle Fisheries Act, 1952, and the Foyle Fisheries Act (Northern Ireland), 1952.

We are, Sir,

Your obedient Servants,

SEAN O BRAONAIN (*Chairman*).

J. EDWARDS.

E. O'KELLY.

S. W. MURRAY (*Secretary*).

27th February, 1953

FOYLE FISHERIES REPORT

for the six months period ended 30th September, 1952

Part I—General

1. Functions of the Commission. The duties imposed on the Commission by Section 11 of the Acts are the management of the fishing rights in the Lough and River Foyle which are vested in the Minister for Agriculture and the Ministry of Commerce, and the conservation, protection and improvement of the fisheries of the Foyle Area generally. The Foyle Area consists of the districts administered by the former Moville and Londonderry Boards of Conservators respectively and includes the catchment area of all waters and their tributaries and lakes which drain into the sea between Malin Head and Downhill. The approximate extent of the area is 1,500 square miles and the length of the principal rivers and streams therein 700 miles.

2. Appointment of Commission. The members of the Commission were appointed as from the 1st April, 1952, and the Commission held its first meeting in Londonderry on the same date. Mr. Sean O Braonain was elected Chairman and in accordance with the Acts Mr. Sidney W. Murray became Secretary.

3. Boards of Conservators. The first corporate act of the Commission was to meet the members of the Londonderry and Moville Boards which under the Acts were dissolved on the 1st April, 1952. These meetings took place at Londonderry and Lifford respectively and were characterized by the friendly and co-operative attitude of the outgoing conservators.

The financial position of the Boards at the 31st March, 1952, is shown in the audited accounts (Appendix 1).

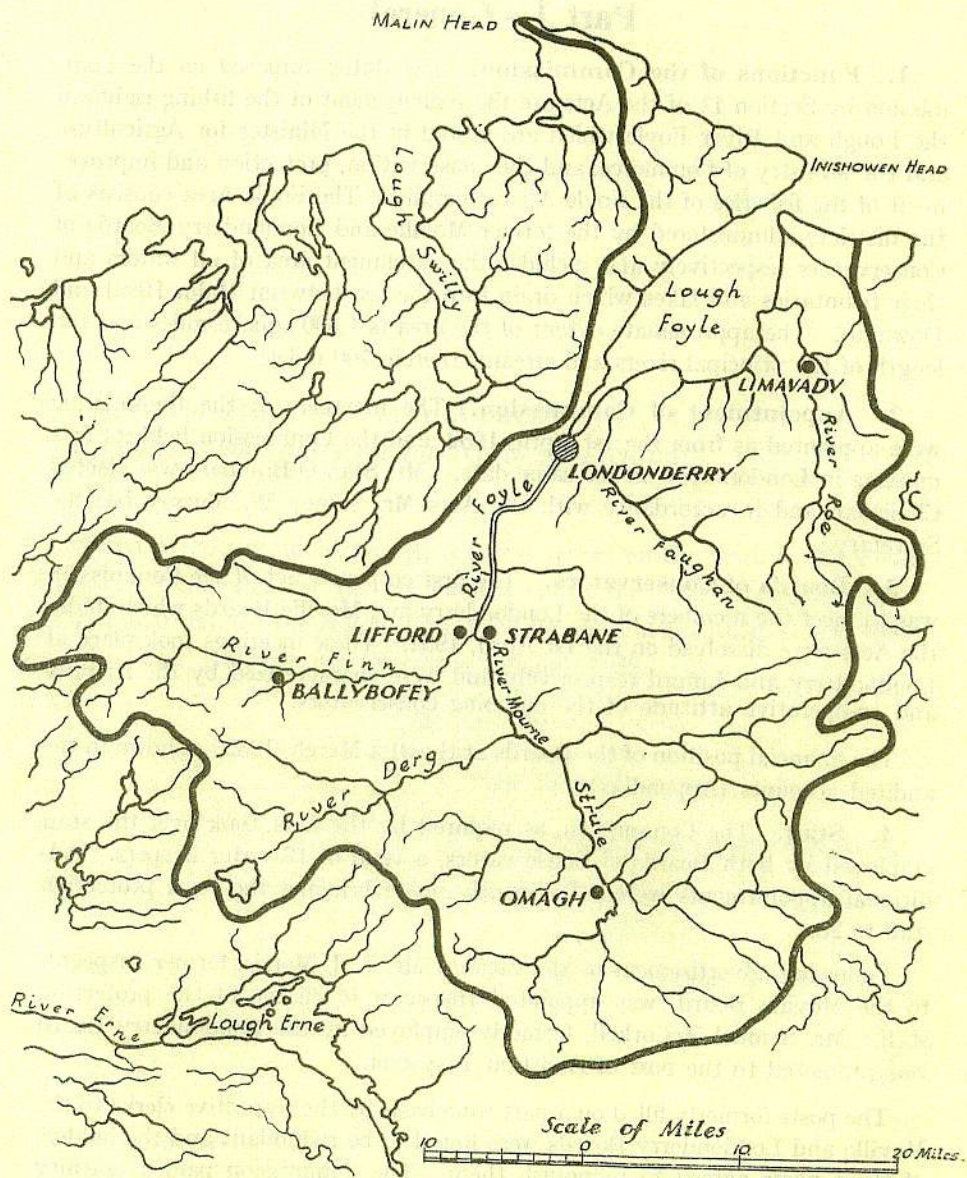
4. Staff. The Commission, as required by the Acts, took over the staff employed by both Boards of Conservators, a total of 13 water keepers. Additional appointments were subsequently made bringing the total protection staff to 28.

Following advertisement of the vacancy Mr. T. J. Morris, former Inspector to the Moville Board, was appointed Inspector in charge of the protection staff. Mr. Samuel McCorkell, formerly employed by the Londonderry Board was promoted to the post of Assistant Inspector.

The posts formerly filled on a part time basis by the respective clerks to the Moville and Londonderry Boards were found to be redundant and the holders of these posts agreed to relinquish them. The Commission paid a gratuity to each of these officers.

5. Office Premises. The Commission as required by the Acts, set up two offices, one at 8 Victoria Road, Londonderry, and the other at The Court-house, Lifford.

River Map of Foyle Area



Part II—Conservancy

6. Restriction of Netting. The first aim of conservancy is to provide favourable conditions for the maintenance of an adequate and continuing stock of fish. This presents peculiar difficulties on a river system such as the Foyle which is fished not only by anglers but also by a considerable body of netsmen. Restriction of netting suggests itself as the obvious step to prevent over-fishing and the Commission accordingly gave special consideration to the feasibility of imposing such restrictions.

An important factor in the consideration of this problem was that the commercial lessees, who had occupied the river for many years before the Governments had purchased the fishing rights, had usually fished the river between Culmore Point and Lifford with no more than 20 nets. Although the lessees would presumably have pursued a prudent course of fishing calculated to conserve the capital value of the fishery, it was also to be presumed that they would have so regulated the intensity of fishing as to earn optimum profits. The contention could therefore reasonably be made that the river could be fully exploited by the use of 20 nets, and that this figure should be adopted as the maximum for the issue of net licences.

In the conditions that confronted the Commission on the Foyle such a drastic curtailment of the right of public fishing did not seem desirable. Over 300 net licences had been taken out in 1951, and the signs were that a somewhat similar number of applications would be made in 1952. The Commission felt that to attempt to satisfy such a demand with a mere 20 licences might result in disturbed conditions on the river with possible repercussions of a far reaching nature.

If there was to be restriction of nets, it was therefore obvious that the figure would have to be much higher than 20. Apologists for the netsmen had contended that 300 nets fished by individual fishermen within the limits imposed by tidal and water conditions would take no more fish than 20 nets operated under the same conditions. Whatever the truth of this argument it seemed to the Commission that 200 or even 150 nets could in the peculiar conditions obtaining on the Foyle catch as many fish as 300 nets or more, and that therefore a numerical restriction in itself could not be relied upon to produce any diminution in total catch. Moreover it was felt that the fixing of an arbitrary limit on net licences, unrelated to any assessment of the catching power of a net and unsupported by an authoritative survey of the capacity of the river to maintain the prescribed number of nets would have been difficult to justify or defend.

Administrative difficulties would also have arisen in the operation of a scheme of licence restriction. Many fishermen in the Foyle area now depend on fishing for part at least of their living, and the Commission was averse to exposing these men's livelihoods to the hazard of a lottery for licences or of such other method of choice as might have been adopted. In these circumstances the Commission came to the conclusion that a numerical restriction of net licences was not a practical possibility and might not in any event provide a solution of the problem of over-fishing.

7. Other remedies for over-fishing. The existing statutory safeguards against over-fishing forbid the use of destructive methods of fishing, and provide for an annual close season of $7\frac{1}{2}$ months and a weekly close time of 48 hours. The Commission found that there had been some disregard of these provisions and came to the conclusion that the situation called for the adoption of a rigorous policy of enforcement, together with an extension of the existing prohibitions.

8. Regulations. In pursuance of this policy the Commission made Regulations dealing with the following matters:

- (1) Licensing of Fishing Engines
- (2) Control of Netting
- (3) Restriction of Netting
- (4) Returns by Licence Holders
- (5) River Finn—Extension of weekly close time
- (6) Prohibition of Fresh Water Netting.

An abstract of these Regulations is printed in Appendix II. Their total effect is restrictive, the most effective regulations being those which prescribe the stretches of the river on which fishing is altogether prohibited because of the particularly destructive effect of netting in these waters. These waters were first defined as sanctuaries by the fishery authority in Dublin in 1949, by regulations which applied only to the Donegal side of the river. The Commission adopted the regulations thus making them applicable from bank to bank, and subsequently by amending orders extended the sanctuaries some distance up the Rivers Mourne and Finn so as to protect resting fish at or near the mouths of these tributaries.

9. Enforcement. During the regime of the Londonderry and Moville Boards of Conservators the enforcement of the Fishery Acts was to some extent hindered by the fact that concerted action by the two Boards was not feasible and evasion by offenders was possible. The establishment of the Commission as a joint authority over the whole area of the Foyle and its tributaries provided the unified control that was necessary to enable protection measures to be organised simultaneously on both banks. Although it is yet too early to say that illegal fishing has been stamped out, the Commission is satisfied that standards of protection showed an improvement during the 1952 season and is confident that this improvement can be maintained.

During the period covered by this report the Commission instituted proceedings in respect of infringements against the fishery law and secured 27 convictions.

The Inspectors and River Watchers discharged their duties of enforcement very satisfactorily, and it is worthy of record that they met with a considerable amount of co-operation from the general body of netsmen and anglers. The Commission also desires to express its appreciation of the valuable services rendered by the Garda Síochána and the Royal Ulster Constabulary throughout the Area in the protection of the fisheries.

10. Restocking. Considerable interest in the possibility of re-opening the Newtown Stewart hatchery has been shown by the Angling Clubs in the Foyle Area and the Commission has agreed to provide financial assistance to this end. A representative Committee has been set up to carry out stripping in the spawning season. Fry will be distributed to rivers in the Foyle area or ova exchanged for ova from other rivers under the direction of an Executive Committee, of which a member of the Commission will be Chairman.

11. Advisory Council. Arrangements for the election of members to the Advisory Council were put in hand before the end of the period covered by this report. An abstract of the regulations dealing with elections is printed in Appendix II.

12. State of the Fisheries. Reports by the Commission's Inspector indicate that runs of spring fish were observed on 10th March, 28th March and the week ended 10th May when water conditions were favourable. Runs of grilse were observed on 5th June, 16th June, 21st/22nd June, 29th June,

5th July and 17th July. Runs of sea-trout took place on 6th June, 13th June and 5th July. There were heavy floods 2nd to 6th August and 8th to 14th August—the latter being exceptional in volume of water.

While some rivers appear reasonably well stocked, it is considered that the numbers of breeding fish in the rivers generally are below the level required for the adequate maintenance of stocks.

Comparatively little damage appears to have been caused by flax water, but other forms of pollution are giving cause for concern. A detailed survey of the purity of the water in the river Foyle has been undertaken.

Part III—Management

13. Londonderry Stretch. Under the heading of Management the Commission's duty is to deal with the assets under its control to the best commercial advantage compatible with proper conservancy. The part of the river which flows between County Londonderry banks had been preserved as a several fishery up to the time of the purchase by the Governments. The Acts empower the Commission to deal with this stretch at its discretion during a transitional period of three years from 1st April, 1952.

The Commission decided to let the Londonderry stretch on lease as a several fishery and tenders were invited for the season of 1952.

The fishing was advertised as comprising the right for one season to fish the following nets:

- (1) Two draft nets at Culmore.
- (2) Three stake nets at Rosses Bay
- (3) Four draft nets at Prehen.

Four tenders were received of which the highest—£5,250, inclusive of rates and licence duties—was accepted.

The right to fish a draft net at the Roe mouth in Lough Foyle was renewed for one season to the previous tenant (who had been accustomed to fish this net for many years) at an agreed yearly rent of £50 (exclusive of rates and licence duties).

14. Angling. Angling is permitted in the tidal portion of the River Faughan at moderate charges. Permits are issued for the season and shorter periods in respect of salmon and sea-trout and for the season only in the case of brown trout.

15. Table I shows particulars of licences issued and licence duties paid in the 1951 and 1952 seasons.

TABLE I
RODS

Description of Rods	Number		Rate of Duty		Total	
	1951	1952	1951	1952	1951	1952
Single Salmon Rod : Season	934	773	30/- 40/-	30/- 40/-	£1,422	£1,533
Others	72	253	10/- 20/-	10/-	£43 10s.	£126 10s.
Totals	1,006	1,026			£1,465 10s.	£1,659 10s.

NETS

Description of Nets	Number		Rate of Duty		Total	
	1951	1952	1951	1952	1951	1952
Stake	5	3	£45	£60	£225	£180
Bag	1	1	£18	£24	£18	£24
Draft :						
Foyle Tideway ..	—	313	—	£16	—	£5,008
Elsewhere ..	—	18	—	£5	—	£90
Special Local Licences ..	55	—	£40	—	£2,200	—
Moville Board ..	196	—	£4	—	£784	—
Londonderry Board	65	—	£4 10s.	—	£292 10s.	—
Drift :						
Foyle Commission	—	39	—	£5	—	£195
Moville Board ..	18	—	£3	—	£54	—
Londonderry Board	—	—	£4 10s.	—	—	—
Totals ..	340	374			£3,573 10s.	£5,497

Table II shows the numbers and weights of fish caught during the season according to the returns made by netsmen and anglers :—

TABLE II

	Salmon		Sea Trout		Total	
	Number	Weight (lbs.)	Number	Weight (lbs.)	Number	Weight (lbs.)
Nets ..	39,538	277,608	1,904	2,309	41,442	279,917
Rods ..	1,662	11,555	4,125	4,639	5,787	16,194
Total ..	41,200	289,163	6,029	6,948	47,229	296,111

The results in Table II are included in the graphs reproduced in Appendix III showing the yield of the river for the years 1808-1823, 1827-1835, and 1920-1952. The data for the two early periods is taken from the Ordnance Survey of the County of Londonderry (1837) and for the modern period from official statistics and from the records of the Foyle and Bann Fisheries, Ltd., by courtesy of the directors of that Company.

The Ordnance Survey of 1837 contains some interesting historical facts about the Foyle Fishery, of which excerpts are printed as an addition to Appendix III.

16. Accounts. The accounts of the Commission are reproduced in Appendix I.

17. Acknowledgments. We wish to record our thanks to the Governor and Assistants of the Irish Society and to their agent, Mr. Peter W. Dickson, for their accommodating attitude in helping us to overcome the numerous difficulties involved in taking over the Fisheries. We are likewise indebted to Major J. L. Kinnaid of the Foyle and Bann Fisheries, Ltd., for his practical advice and assistance. Our thanks are also due to the members of the Londonderry and Moville Boards of Conservators whose fund of experience and counsel has been unreservedly placed at our disposal.

APPENDIX I

FOYLE FISHERIES COMMISSION

Dr.

Revenue Account for the Period from 1st April, 1952, to 30th September, 1952

Cr.

To Rents ..	£130 2 4
" Insurance ..	14 0 7
" Wages and Salaries ..	2,981 14 1
" National Insurance ..	87 6 8
" Licence Distributors' Remuneration and Commission ..	176 19 6
" Travelling and Subsistence ..	523 6 11
" Postage, Stationery and Advertising ..	290 0 2
" Stores and Equipment ..	172 17 6
" Repairs ..	66 7 8
" Sundries, including Professional Charges ..	226 13 11
" Legal Costs ..	4 13 8
	<u>£4,674 3 0</u>

9 DEPRECIATION:

" Fixtures and Fittings ..	£6 19 6
" Boats ..	4 0 0
	<u>10 19 6</u>
" Balance carried down ..	7,572 1 10
	<u>£12,257 4 4</u>

To Liabilities of dissolved Boards paid or provided for:

Londonderry Board ..	£87 5 1
Moville Board ..	910 13 2
	<u>£997 18 3</u>
" Payments to Clerks of dissolved Londonderry and Moville Boards in respect of loss of office ..	300 0 0
" Surplus, carried forward ..	8,486 18 4
	<u>£9,784 16 7</u>

By Rents from Derry Mouth Fisheries ..	£5,024 0 0
" Licence Duties ..	6,982 0 0
" Permit Fees ..	55 1 0
" Fish Dealers' Licences ..	10 5 0
	<u>£12,071 6 0</u>
" Fishery Rates ..	84 10 6
" Fines and Costs recovered ..	16 17 0
" Rents from Premises, including sub-lettings ..	64 0 0
" Sundry Receipts ..	2 1 0
" Accrued Interest on Deposit Receipt ..	18 9 10

By Balance brought down ..
 " Rents and Rates accrued due to dissolved Londonderry and Moville Boards and taken over by Commission ..

	<u>£12,257 4 4</u>
	.. £7,572 1 10
	.. 2,212 14 9
	<u>£9,784 16 7</u>

FOYLE FISHERIES COMMISSION
Balance Sheet, 30th September, 1952

LIABILITIES

SUNDY CREDITORS AND ACCRUED EXPENSES .. £655 12 7

REVENUE ACCOUNT .. 8,486 18 4

FOYLE FISHERIES COMMISSION :
Seán O Braonain, Chairman.
J. Edwards
E. O'Kelly
S. W. Murray, Secretary
19th December, 1952

ASSETS

Payment to the Irish Society under an Agreement dated 8th April, 1952, referred to in the second schedule to the Foyle Fisheries Act, 1952, and the Foyle Fisheries Act (Northern Ireland), 1952 .. £110,279 12 10

BUILDINGS at Cost .. £300 0 0
FIXTURES AND FITTINGS at Cost .. £140 19 6
Less : Depreciation .. 6 19 6

BOATS at Cost .. £78 0 0
Less : Depreciation .. 4 0 0

MOTOR VAN at Cost .. 74 0 0
SUNDRY DEBTORS AND PAYMENTS IN ADVANCE .. 566 12 10
CASH AT BANK AND IN HAND .. 716 1 8

Bank Balances .. £7,323 9 0
Cash in Hand and in hands of Licence Distributors .. 28 7 5

£9,142 10 11

As Auditors appointed by the Minister for Agriculture under para. 17(2) of the Third Schedule to the Foyle Fisheries Act, 1952, we report that we have examined the foregoing Revenue Account and Balance Sheet of the Foyle Fisheries Commission. We have obtained all the information and explanations which we have required. In our opinion the said Revenue Account and Balance Sheet are properly drawn up so as to exhibit a true and correct view of the state of the Commission's affairs according to the best of our information and the explanations given to us and as shown by the books of the Commission.

39/41 Dame Street,

Dublin. 19th December, 1952.

Craig, Gardner & Co.,

Chartered Accountants.

As Auditors appointed by the Ministry of Commerce under para. 17(2) of the Third Schedule to the Foyle Fisheries Act (Northern Ireland), 1952, we report that we have examined the foregoing Revenue Account and Balance Sheet of the Foyle Fisheries Commission. We have obtained all the information and explanations which we have required. In our opinion the said Revenue Account and Balance Sheet are properly drawn up so as to exhibit a true and correct view of the state of the Commission's affairs according to the best of our information and the explanation given to us and as shown by the Books of the Commission.

7 Howard Street, Belfast.

Craig, Gardner & Co.,

Chartered Accountants, Auditors.

MOVILLE BOARD OF CONSERVATORS

Abstract of Accounts for Period 1st October, 1951 to 31st March, 1952

Expenditure	Total	Receipts	Total
Salaries and Wages :—	£ s. d.		£ s. d.
Clerk	48 0 0	Balance from previous Account ..	£1,232 12 10
Inspector	131 14 0	Licence Duties :—	
Bailiffs	789 3 8	58 Rods for one year (£2) ..	116 0 0
Travelling and Subsistence ..	139 5 6	7 Endorsements (10s.) ..	3 10 0
Workmen's Compensation Assurance ..	20 1 0	Special Local Licences ..	40 0 0
Stationery and Printing	4 12 6	Fishery Rates :—	
Postage	8 0 0	Arrears of Previous Rates ..	344 8 6
Rent of Premises	7 10 0	Current Rate	18 19 6
Destruction of Vermin	1 0 0	Costs and Sale of Forfeited Gear ..	6 0 0
Remittance Special Local Licences to Department ..	1,870 0 0	Subscriptions :—	
Sundries	15 5 10	Destruction of Vermin ..	2 10 0
		Bank Interest	1 8 3
		Balance	*1,269 3 5
	£3,034 12 6		£3,034 12 6

I certify the foregoing to be a true Abstract from the Books and Accounts of this Board for the Period ended the 31st day of March, 1952.
Dated this 16th day of May, 1952.

Eamon O Foghtu,
Auditor.

* This amount was subsequently reduced, mainly by remittances from the Minister for Agriculture, to a net debit of £686 9s. 5d.

Receipts and Disbursements from 1st November, 1951 to 31st March, 1952

We certify the foregoing to be a true abstract from the Books and Accounts of the Board for the period ended 31st March, 1982.

2 Wellington Place, Belfast.
13th May, 1952.

Martin Shaw, Leslie & Shaw,
Auditors

APPENDIX II

Abstract of Regulations made during the period 1st April to 30th September, 1952

Foyle Area (Licensing of Fishing Engines) Regulations, 1952

dated 9th April, 1952

PREScribing licence duties payable in respect of the following Fishing Engines :—

Salmon Rod	..	..	..	£2
Stake Net	..	..	..	£60
Bag Net	..	..	..	£24
Draft Net (Foyle Tideway)	..	..	..	£16
Draft Net (other than Foyle Tideway)	..	..	..	£5
Drift Net	..	..	..	£5

PROVIDING (1) that the holder of a current salmon rod licence issued by a Board of Conservators may fish in Foyle Area on payment of a licence fee of 10s. ;

(2) that a seven-day licence may be issued on payment of a licence fee of 10/- ; and

(3) that the licence duty of £16 on Draft Nets (Foyle Tideway) may be paid in two moieties.

Foyle Area (Control of Netting) Regulations, 1952

dated 9th April, 1952

PREScribing the order in which licensees may shoot and haul their nets at a fishing station, and restricting to one hour the time in which a licensee may occupy the station when others are waiting their turns to fish.

PREScribing the painting on every boat used for netting the number of the licence issued for use with the boat.

Foyle Area (Returns by Licence Holders) Regulations, 1952

dated 9th April, 1952

REQUIRING the holders of the following licences to make returns of catches within three days of the end of each week of the fishing season :—

Stake Net
Bag Net
Draft Net (Foyle Tideway)
Draft Net (other than Foyle Tideway)
Drift Net

REQUIRING the holders of salmon rod licences to make returns of catches not later than 31st October in such year.

Foyle Area (Restriction of Netting) (No. 2) Regulations, 1952

dated 6th June, 1952 (revoking previous regulations

dated 9th April, 1952)

PROHIBITING the use of any net (other than a landing net for angling) on the River Foyle—

(a) between the Carrickmore—Grange Foyle line and a line drawn across the River Foyle at right angles to its course at the northernmost point of the townland of Corkan Isle in the counties of Donegal and Tyrone ; and

(b) between a line drawn across the River Foyle at right angles to its course from the southernmost point of the townland of Islandmore in the County of Donegal and straight lines

I. across the River Finn at the northern end of the townland of Castletown in the County of Tyrone ;

II. across the River Mourne at the railway bridge known as Mourne Bridge.

PROHIBITING the use in the tidal waters of the River Foyle below or downstream of the Carrickmore—Grange Foyle line to Drumnashear—

(a) of one or more draft nets making together a greater length than 160 yards ; and

(b) of draft nets at a lesser distance from one another than 200 yards.

PROHIBITING the use in the tidal waters of the River Foyle upstream of the Carrickmore—Grange Foyle line and in the tidal waters of the Rivers Finn and Mourne ;

(a) of one or more draft nets making together a greater length than 85 yards ; and

(b) the use of draft nets at a lesser distance from one another than 100 yards.

Foyle Area (River Finn—Weekly Close Time) Regulations, 1952

dated 6th June, 1952

PRESCRIBING the weekly close time in the tidal waters of the River Finn as the period beginning 6 o'clock a.m. on Saturday and ending at 6 o'clock a.m. on the following Tuesday.

Foyle Area (Prohibition of Freshwater Netting) Regulations, 1952

dated 27th June, 1952

PROHIBITING the use in freshwater of any net (other than a landing net for angling) and prohibiting the possession or control within 200 yards of the freshwater portion of any waters, of any net capable of being used for taking or killing salmon or trout.

Foyle Area (Elections to Advisory Council) Regulations, 1952

dated 9th September, 1952

PRESCRIBING for elections to the Advisory Council as follows:—

(a) UPPER ELECTORAL DIVISION (waters of the River Foyle to the south of the County Londonderry boundary line, and any waters connected with and flowing into the river south of that line).

Two Members to be elected by holders of Salmon Rod Licences.

Four Members to be elected by holders of Net Licences.

One Member to be elected by Rated Occupiers of Fisheries.

(b) LOWER ELECTORAL DIVISION (Waters of the Foyle Area other than those comprised in the Upper Electoral Division).

Two Members to be elected by holders of Salmon Rod Licences.

Two Members to be elected by holders of Net Licences.

One Member to be elected by Rated Occupiers of Fisheries.

Each licence holder is entitled to vote in accordance with the following scale:—

Licence duty of at least £2 and not more than £10—1 vote.

Licence duty over £10 and not more than £20—2 votes.

Licence duty over £20 and not more than £30—3 votes.

Licence duty over £30—4 votes.

Each Rated Occupier is entitled to vote in accordance with the following scale:—

Fishery rate paid in the previous fishery year not more than £10—1 vote, £20—2 votes, £30—3 votes, over £30—4 votes.

Extract from Ordnance Survey of the County of Londonderry (1837)

In a MS. Account in the Library of Trinity College, relating to the Salmon Fisheries of Derry, drawn up for Sir William Petty about 1682, the then lessee states, "for the Fishing below the Leap and all Lough Foyle, I paid this 7 years near £1600 per ann."—a sum which is remarkably high when compared to the rent now paid (*viz.*, £1,250) for the Fisheries of the Foyle and Bann. This proportion is, indeed, still higher, when a comparison is made between the value of money expressed in produce at the two periods. In 1613, for instance, "the prices of provision in Ulster were, for a cow or bullock, 15s. (about one halfpenny per pound); a sheep from 16d. to 2s.; a hog 2s.; barley, 11d. a bushel; oats, 4d. a bushel; strong beer, 16s. a barrel;"—(Concise View); prices not more in most cases than one-seventh of the present prices. Hence, it might be inferred that the salmon bore, in proportion to flesh meat, a value in 1613 seven times greater than at present (1837) or, in other words, as the price of a pound of salmon in the Derry market is now nearly the same as that of a pound of beef, and the proportion of the price of beef in 1613 and the present period is nearly 1 to 7, that the price of salmon has during that time experienced little variation. This reasoning is on the supposition that the rents are a fair test of the value of the Fishery; but some modification is manifestly necessary, on account of the increased and more expensive protection now required.

In July, 1616, "The Commissioners declared the markets were well supplied with fish, and a very long salmon could be procured for 4d. 6d. or 8d." Unfortunately no weight is here given; but as the salmon of the Foyle are seldom large, average about 5 lbs. or 5½ lbs., the price by this estimate would be about 1½d. per lb., or somewhat less than one-half of its present price: hence, the money value of fish has risen in a proportion of between 1 : 2 and 1 : 3, and that of meat 1 : 8.

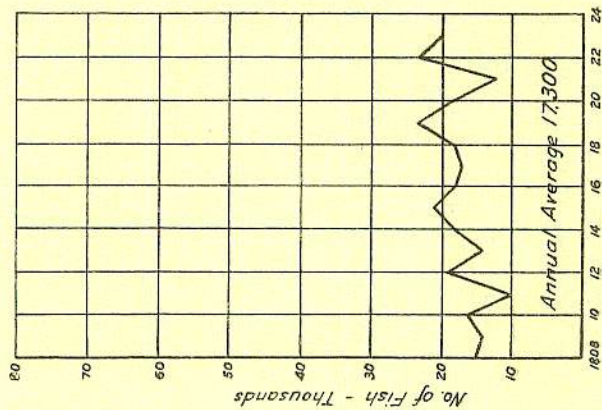
In 1721 the value of salmon was in London £18 per ton—not much below the price for which the Foyle salmon has sold (1837) on an average in the Liverpool and home markets. In June, 1722, "The Society disposed of all their salmon in London, at the rate of £14 11s. per ton," by contract and in that year it is stated that "The charges attending the fishery of Lough Foyle exceeded the value of the fish taken." In 1723, the salmon was sold at £15 per ton; in 1724, at £16 5s.; these extracts confirming the remarks made on the singular constancy in the money value of the Fisheries, and of the fish sold.

The quantity of salmon taken seems to have undergone little permanent change. In the MS. report made to Sir William Petty (1682) before referred to, there is the following account of the produce at that period:—"The greatest quantity of fish taken at a draught any time this 7 years, was about Eight hundred, and that but once or twice, in that time, and in a place where the river is contracted, for the common taking it is in no way certain. Sometimes, but 10, 20, 40, 100, just as the schoole comes into the river. The quantity formerly taken were from 170 tons to 250, accounting 6 barrels into the ton but these four years past vastly decayed, and that successively." In 1721, 121 tons were taken, and in 1740 it is stated that, one year with another, it was estimated that the quantity taken amounted to 120 or 130 tons. This was the produce of the Bann and Foyle together; but taking one-half (about 1,250 cwt.) as that of the Foyle, it may be compared with the following returns of the quantities taken before and after the introduction of stake-nets, given in evidence by Mr. Buist, manager of the Fisheries, to the Commissioners of Inquiry, in 1835. Each hundred weight being equal to 120 lbs.

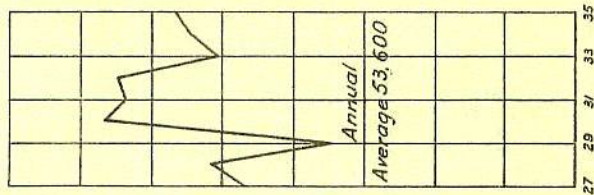
Previous to the Introduction of Stake Nets	1808	1809	1810	1811	1812	1813	1814	1815	1816	1817	1818	1819	1820	1821	1822	1823	Annual Average
	Number of Fish	14,837	14,413	17,145	9,601	19,285	18,434	20,630	17,624	16,644	17,860	23,334	18,930	11,490	22,816	20,384	
Weight of Fish.—cwt.	742	720	857	480	964	719	922	1,031	881	832	893	1,167	946	574	1,141	1,019	868

Sub- sequent to the Intro- duction of Stake Nets	1827		1828		1829		1830		1831		1832		1833		1834		1835		Total Annual Average
	Stake Nets	Draught Nets	Stake Nets	Draught Nets	Stake Nets	Draught Nets	Stake Nets	Draught Nets	Stake Nets	Draught Nets	Stake Nets	Draught Nets	Stake Nets	Draught Nets	Stake Nets	Draught Nets	Stake Nets	Draught Nets	
Number	13,911	32,090	13,070	37,536	9,770	23,000	30,957	35,096	23,267	39,293	31,497	32,950	20,757	29,580	20,575	33,173	22,344	33,562	53,603
Weight —cwt.	939	1,605	789	1,867	551	1,150	1,741	1,855	1,122	1,965	1,795	1,747	1,084	1,532	1,037	1,678	1,164	1,705	2,814

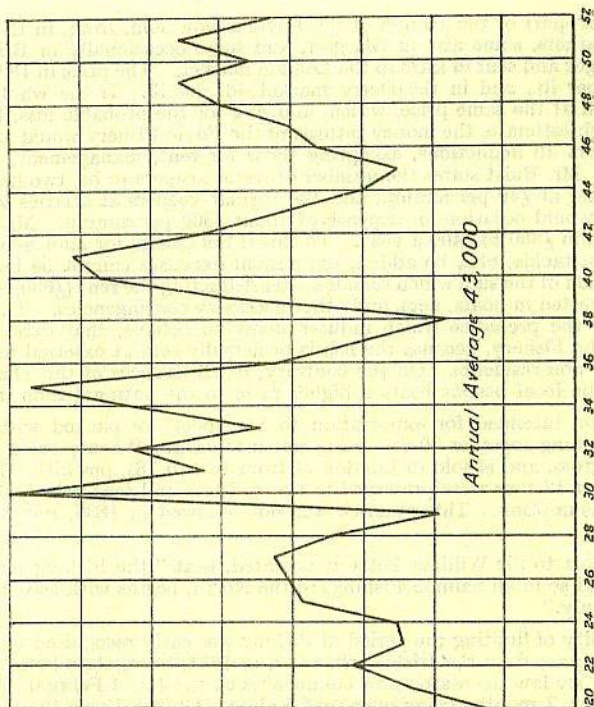
Period 1808-23



Period 1827-35



Period 1920-52



Y S Q R S

The greater part of the salmon of the Foyle is now sold, fresh, in the Liverpool and Manchester markets, some also in Glasgow, and some occasionally in Bristol; a part is pickled in vinegar and sent in kitts to the London market. The price in 1835, at Liverpool averaged 6d. per lb., and in the Derry market 4d. per lb. If the whole fish taken be supposed to sell at the same price, which, allowing for the probable loss, the ice, and the freight, is a high estimate, the money returns of the Foyle Fishery would amount to about £5,600, free from all deductions, excepting those for rent, management, protection, and for fishermen. Mr. Buist states the number of water keepers to be, two head keepers, one at £50, the other at £40 per annum, and 120 regular keepers at salaries varying from £2 to £8; which would occasion an expense of about £500 per annum. Mr. Little states it as averaging from £300 to £400 a year. To this if the charge for management, fishermen, repairing boats, tackle, etc., be added, the annual expenses cannot be less than £1,500; a large proportion of the sum which remains after deducting the rent (£600), and the interest of the capital vested in boats, nets, and other necessary contingencies. This consideration should remove the prejudice which induces many to believe, that little local benefit is derived from the Fishery, because the fish is principally sold at external markets, and the proprietors are non-residents. On the contrary, of all fisheries of this class it may fairly be said, that the local benefit bears a higher ratio to the national than in most others.

The Salmon intended for exportation to Liverpool are packed with ice in boxes; 15 Salmon weighing together 90 lbs. being put into each. When pickled the kitt weighs about 45 lbs. gross, and is sold in London at from 16s. to 18s. per kitt. For some years, also, about 10 or 12 tons were preserved in tin canisters and sent principally to Liverpool for foreign consumption. This practice was not followed in 1835, but it is intended to resume it.

In the report to Sir William Petty it is stated, that "the Fishing for Salmon in the Bann River, and so in all Salmon Fishings in the North, begins with boat the 1st May and ends the last July."

The necessity of limiting the period of Fishing was early recognised by the legislature, and an act was passed by the Irish Parliament, in 1634, to regulate both the Salmon and Eel Fisheries. By law the season now commences on the 1st of February and ends on the 1st of September, 7 months being open and 5 close. On the Foyle the nets are removed the day after the prescribed period, but the fishing rarely begins before April, few early or spring fish appearing in the river.

PM. 310

Printed in Northern Ireland by W. & G. Baird, Ltd., Belfast.

PUBLISHED BY HER MAJESTY'S STATIONERY OFFICE

To be purchased from
80 Chichester Street, BELFAST

2 Edmund Street, BIRMINGHAM, 3	York House, Kingsway, LONDON, W.C.2
Tower Lane, BRISTOL, 1	423 Oxford Street, LONDON, W.1
1 St. Andrew's Crescent, CARDIFF	13a Castle Street, EDINBURGH, 2
39 King Street, MANCHESTER, 2	or from any Bookseller

1953

Price 1s. 0d. net