The American Fly Fisher

Volume 7 • Number 1 • WINTER 1980

East is East

The sportfishing tradition in the Atlantic states is well over 300 years old, and in this issue we cover various parts of that tradition, from beginnings (page 29) into the 1950's (page 11). There is so much of interest, and so much to tell, that we doubt there will ever come a time when we will suffer from a shortage of subject matter. As we start our seventh volume, we seem barely to have begun our exploration of angling history.

Though nowadays we commonly think of the Catskills as the "Cradle of Civilization" for modern American fly fishing, the American Angling Heritage has countless other roots, from the brackish sloughs of the Carolinas to the North Shore of the St. Lawrence. In fact, our occasional tunnel-vision about the great Catskill streams and the writers they inspired has caused us to miss some intriguing opportunities for thought. For example, we know that Theodore Gordon lived for some years in the South—the picture of him as a young man that we featured in Volume 6 Number 3 was taken in Savannah. Little is known about his life in the south, but he was an avid outdoorsman then. Perhaps as a southern bird hunter he began to experiment with materials and tying techniques that later became famous in his Catskill days.

Additionally, the Virginias should interest us more. The people who colonized the Chesapeake area were both socially and politically quite like the rural gentleman-angler we see in Walton, and their settlement began and developed during his life. We know they fished, for sport, and we know they traded actively with colonies farther north; what influences did they have on the gathering creative forces of American angling thought?

These are very vague questions, of course, and only of interest to the most tradition-minded of anglers. But, like all historical pursuits, our appreciation of our past requires occasional reassessment of our perspective. Ken Cameron's penetrating examination of 19th Century anglers is an example of how provocative and useful such reassessments can be. And the growing appeal of this magazine, after six years of publication, is some proof that there are quite a few anglers to whom such things matter.

The American Fly Fisher

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On the cover: members of the St. Marguerite Club (c. 1890) were part of the angling aristocracy discussed by Ken Cameron beginning on page 2.

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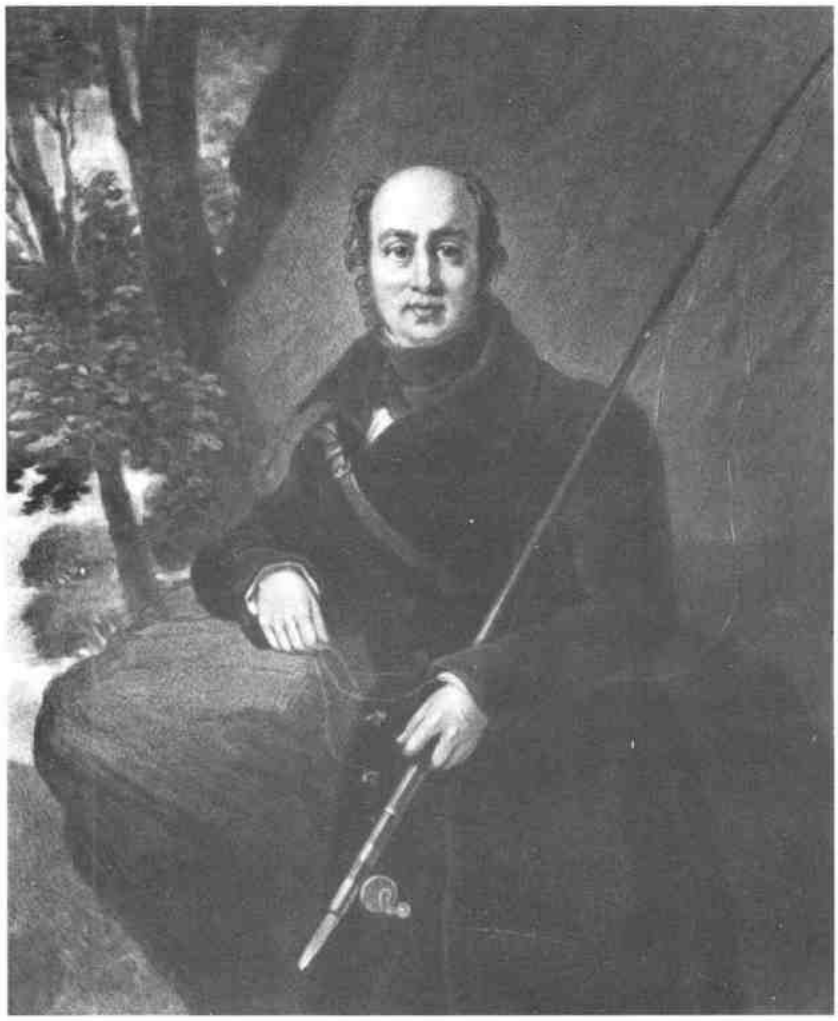
The Victorian Angler

by Ken Cameron



The Victorian Angler at mid-century; pictured in **The True Enjoyment of Angling**, *by Henry Phillips (London, 1843). His tackle and technique were sophisticated, and his angling creed was self-consciously pastoral. But he also carried with him to the river a complex baggage of ideas about his world, and these ideas are as important a part of our heritage as are his rod and reel.*

Alexandrina Victoria, "granddaughter of George III, and only child of George III's fourth son, Edward Augustus . . . by Mary Louis Victoria, fourth daughter and youngest child of Francis Frederick Anthony" reigned as Victoria, Queen of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, and Empress of India, from 1837 to 1901 (*Dictionary of National Biography*). The dates of her reign embrace the formative period of modern fishing (as they embrace the formative period of modern life) whether one is talking about fly fishing (Ronalds and Halford), tackle (the split-bamboo rod, the fixed-spool reel, the bass-casting rod and reel), or methods (trolling from boats, plug-casting, "hardware" lures) with so few exceptions that they are interesting only to the stickler. To be sure, some of these developments were anticipated before the eighteen-thirties, while the foundation of sportfishing itself was already hundreds of years old; and some modern aspects of fishing were developed after her death (the American streamer fly, for example, and most matters relating to plastics) but the dates of her rule will serve to define the period during which modern angling was created, as they will serve to define the period during which most things modern were created. The point is, of course, that it was the extent of changes in other areas that swept fishing along.

The Victorian change affected virtually every aspect of life in Great Britain and the United States. At the beginning of the period, the population of both countries was more rural than urban, and the money-producing sources were more agricultural than industrial; by 1901, "no less than 77 per cent of the inhabitants of the United Kingdom were resident in urban districts," (Sir Charles Petrie, *The Edwardians*) and the figure was not sig-

nificantly different in America. In 1830, visual ugliness was not recognized as a major quality of either urban or rural landscape, and cities in both England and America had their peculiar beauties -- Georgian London, Colonial Boston, Federal New York -- but by 1900, ugliness was commonplace, both in the cities and in the countryside, where factory towns had blighted the beauty that had been, and loveliness was often something to be reached at the far end of the rail line. The societies of 1830 were "balanced" -- stratified and apparently static in England, Jeffersonian and apparently stable in America -- but by 1900 much the opposite: "The insolence of the upper to the middle class; the vicious indifference of the middle to the lower; the obsequiousness of the lower to both, all in their turn made mock everywhere of ease and good fellowship." (Frost and Jay, *The English*).

Both national economies saw a severe shift from agricultural to industrial emphasis, with British agriculture suffering from American ascendancy so that the "British landed aristocracy" was overthrown "by the far-distant democracy of American farmers" (Trevelyan, *Illustrated Social History*). And, just as the farm gave way to the factory, so the small town lost its identity in the region, and regionalism itself gave way to a mass consciousness fostered by the revolution in transportation and communications. "The railroad was a novelty in 1846 and an accomplishment in 1876. By the end of the century it was the indispensable and omnipresent element of national growth and cohesion." "In 1840, a good-sized 'big city' newspaper consisted of 4 or 6 pages, was sold to perhaps 4,000 subscribers daily, and cost between 5 and 10 cents . . . . By 1890, as a result of work such as that of the Hoe Company in press technology or Ottmar Mergenthaler, developer of the linotype, a major New York newspaper . . . reached perhaps 300,000 people daily with an edition of 16 or more pages, for 2 cents" (Bernard A. Weisberger, *The New Industrial Society*).

Between 1839 and 1901, Britain and the United States saw the invention and widespread use of the railroad, the telephone, the telegraph, the rotary-drum press; photography, half-tone printing, the Bessemer steel process, and the development of winter wheat for high-yield farming; and such new materials as bakelite and aluminum. It saw the great waves of migration to the United States, first from Ireland and Scotland, later from Central and Southern Europe. It saw the first effects of the three thinkers who were to mold the mind of the first half of the twentieth century -- Marx, Darwin and Freud.

In many respects, the impact of these changes on the two societies were similar, but in one respect they differed greatly. The national senses of aspiration -- the spirits -- were directed differently, Britain's toward the world outside itself, America's toward its own Western vastness. Britain built an economic empire that reached far beyond the bounds of those countries politically hers and invested her capital wherever it would produce profit, including in the United States; this investment created a class of new moneyed men -- investors and managers -- who grasped the power that slipped from the land-bound aristocracy after the eighteen-seventies. With this new power and considerable wealth, these men would enjoy a new kind of leisure -- the "rural sports" of their predecessors, refined and contained in an almost Baroque network of rules, and practiced from an urban base. Fishing would be one of the most important of these activities.

In America, anglophilic Boston and New York might ape the English, although from a much smaller economic base. Because of the proximity to New York, the Catskill waters would continue to attract metropolitan anglers, making the Beaverkill and the Neversink into the Test and Itchen of the United States (and with the same unhappy effects of parochialism that were seen in England after 1885). America, however, was too big and its society too diverse and too mobile to follow the English example closely. Its urban gentlemen were comparatively few, and its mass would look elsewhere.

It looked West to the wilderness.

"Towards the West, in which direction the faces of the party were turned, the eye ranged over an ocean of leaves, glorious and rich in the varied and lively verdure of a generous vegetation ... forming one broad and seemingly interminable carpet of foliage, which stretched away towards the setting sun, until it bounded the horizon, by blending with the clouds, as if the waves and the sky met at the base of the vault of heaven" (Cooper, *The Pathfinder*). In Cooper's Natty Bumpo -- Deerslayer, Pathfinder, Leatherstocking -- Victorian Americans found an idealized image of themselves, a "pathfinder for those who without example and guidance might lose themselves and their values in an urban morass" (Norman Holmes Pearson). And in Cooper's idealized wilderness they found their image of the lands to the West -- not savage, but neutral, all promise and potential, an "ocean of leaves" to be embarked upon. The Cooper period (the mid 1820's to the late 1840's) was the period of hope, to be supplanted by Twain's Gilded Age, mercantile and industrial, and then by the formal closing of the frontier and, by the end of the Victorian period, by a greedy over-reaching that was a fitting, if sad introduction to the America of the twentieth century.

But while it lasted, the Cooper ideal was an admirable one, and it left an imprint on American ideas of wilderness and of "civilized" man in the wilderness. Leatherstocking himself was of a type that would disappear: both civilized man and savage, a "magnificent moral hermaphrodite, born of the savage state and civilization," (Balzac, quoted by Pearson) yet his own idea of a democracy of merit would outlive him. "The most surprising peculiarity about the man himself was the entire indifference with which he regarded all distinctions which did not depend upon personal merit .... " (*Pathfinder*). His America was innocent wildness, in

which a few men roamed to escape cities and excessive civilization; his America persists in our attitudes toward what we now call outdoor recreation. In its emphasis upon such frontier qualities as stamina, woods knowledge and simplicity, it is the characteristic that puts American fishing farthest from English tradition, although it has been complicated and sometimes submerged by a grafting-on of social attitudes that are sometimes identical with Victorian English ones. (Thus, in a large sense, Midwestern black bass fishing was and is "American" in its pragmatism and its enthusiastic acceptance of novelty; Eastern dry-fly fishing was and is "English" in its dependence upon authority, book-knowledge, and a "correct" way of doing things. Like all generalizations, this one cannot be stretched over every instance, and I do not mean to belabor it, but I think it has some importance when one begins to look at, for example, the eminence of James Henshall (*Book of the Black Bass*) or the great affinity between American and Scottish angling throughout much of the nineteenth century.)

Despite this considerable difference between their views of the outdoors, however, English and American society shared a number of basic assumptions. Both believed, for example, that an entrenched upper class, supported ideologically by a middle class, was not merely socially inevitable, but socially desirable; and that work (except for a privileged few) was a moral action and one by which leisure was earned, while recreation was desirable because it renewed the mind and trained the body for work; that non-work or laziness or unemployment were immoral conditions; that private property was not merely a social and economic matter, but also a moral and perhaps a theological one. (In the matter of public ownership of such things as fish, water and open space, England and America differed and America came closer to Scotland, although as the mostly non-resident English took Scottish titles and Scottish lands, spear-headed by Victoria's occupation of "Royal Deeside" around Balmoral, public waters and free fish began to disappear in Scotland, too.)

In both societies, foreigners, especially physically distinguishable foreigners, were seen as comical or menacing or simply undesirable, but, since United States immigration was a national policy, foreigners were "welcome" there, meaning they were socially regrettable but economically essential. Jews were viewed with that paradoxical blend of envy and intense dislike that still typifies anti-Semitism. Women were encouraged to be wholly domestic creatures without political or economic power. Despite Victoria herself, despite notorious women like Sargent's "Madame X", despite Susan B. Anthony, women were second-class citizens at best, and the attitude toward them was significantly not unlike that toward Jews -- paradoxical and contradictory, a mixture of admiration and horror, of envy and distrust, of desire and repulsion. The sexual repression that was to give Lytton Strachey and Aldous Huxley such fertile ground in the next generation was very real, at least in the "better" classes, but it was a repression that had an opposite side (for men, at least) in a callous sexual indulgence. Stevenson's Jekyll/Hyde was an extreme form of the Victorian gentlemen (or of his darker vision of himself); a self-appointed model of virtue like Dickens maintained a public face of propriety, and enjoyed his private life with Ellen Tiernan and his trips to Paris. Watch and Ward Societies were active, but pornography flourished; divorce was taboo, but mistresses were condoned; Woman was worshipped for her Higher Virtue, and prostitution had a heyday.

Recreation -- rural sports, and fishing in particular -- became an escape, usually a very brief escape (although in the United States especially, fishing jaunts of a month to six weeks were common). The society that developed around fishing, as, for example, in fishing camps and fishing clubs, excluded the more powerful psychological pressures of the larger society itself -- People Who Did Not Belong (foreigners, Jews, women), work, and sexual awareness. Fishing, despite occasional encouragements to ladies to take up the rod, was a male activity, as Anglo-Saxon as the losing side in 1066 and as sexless as a Cub Scout banquet.

In terms of a study of underlying attitudes (by which, after all, fishing is affected as much as anything else) to move through Victoria's reign is like riding up an escalator from which one can see the other escalator going down: her reign is the crossing-point of an X, with one crucial set of attitudes emerging as

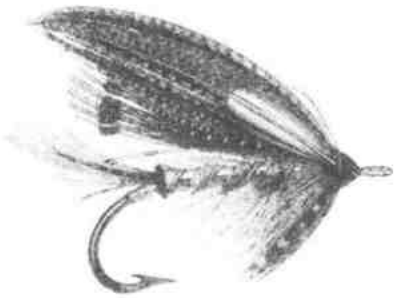
"Killing a Trout," from T. C. Hofland's THE BRITISH ANGLER'S MANUAL, 1848.

another declines. Yet at the historical instant of those years, both sets of attitudes have vigorous proponents -- sometimes both have a vigorous proponent in the same person -- and so the cross is also an X of contradiction: the concept of individual rights (most particularly rights to property) crosses an emerging idea of humanitarianism; on one side are the horrors of child labor, on the other, "the enlarged sympathy with children [which] was one of the chief contributions made by the Victorian English to real civilization." (G. M. Trevelyan). On the one side, the greedy enclosure of open space; on the other, the promise in America of unlimited open space for the taking. On the one side, the inevitable attraction of a previously rural people to crowded and miserable cities; on the other, the great movements toward large public parks and large ideas of conservation. On the one hand, industrialization; on the other, the glorification of such pastoral pursuits as gardening and fishing.

The X of contradiction is the essence of the period. It tells us what Strachey and Freud have told us, that Victoria's was a period of enormous psychological stress, from which we should not be surprised to find that many people escaped into artificially-created enclaves like sportfishing. (Or, rather, we shall find that many men of means escaped into it; we shall not find, by and large, that men of poverty or women of any sort did so, for, even when they did, they left little record.)

History is a snob who speaks in the hieratic croon of a Lord Kenneth Clark. When History wrote of Victorian fishing, History wrote mainly about Himself and His friends and relatives and the fellows of His club or the chaps who had the beat next to His; common, everyday fishermen did not much figure in His memoirs, even though they were around in considerable numbers. Generally when one of them did wander into a sentence or two, History disposed of him with the pejorative "Cockney".

Cockney is an interesting word, one with a general application we all recognize and with a special application to Victorian fishing that we may not. It seems to have come originally from a word meaning a misshapen egg, of all things, and then it shifted from the egg to the bird that hatched out of it, which (because it was a weak bird, I gather) had to be pampered; hence, a cockney was an effeminate weakling. (*O.E.D.*) But by Shakespeare's time, the word came to have associations of the city-born and -bred fellow, especially a Londoner, (still somewhat effeminate, but most of all urban) and so when "Christopher North" wrote in *Blackwood's* Magazine in 1823 that "We do venerate 'the old man eloquent' [Izaak Walton] as truly as the very worst angler in Cockney-land", he was merely extending this sense of Cockney-as-Londoner to that of Cockney-as-Englishman. This sense became an oddly important one as *Cockney* came to stand for an angler who was citified (and hence ignorant), parvenue and middle-class (or lower). "There are a sort of people -- chiefly Cockneys, to whom the filth and



noisome crowding of cities has, by habit, become delightful . . . who effect to laugh . . . at those who delight in the sport of fishing . . ." (*Blackwood's*, 1827). Those who laughed most conspicuously at the sport of fishing were the English poets Leigh Hunt and Byron ("the solitary vice", Byron had called it, thus classing it with such other discredited pleasures as masturbation and reading) who became the "Cockney school" to the literati of Edinburgh, and *Cockney* became the pejorative title for all who were of the wrong class and the wrong condition to understand such niceties as true angling.

By the eighteen-forties, Henry W. Herbert ("Frank Forester") had broadcast the usage in the United States, so

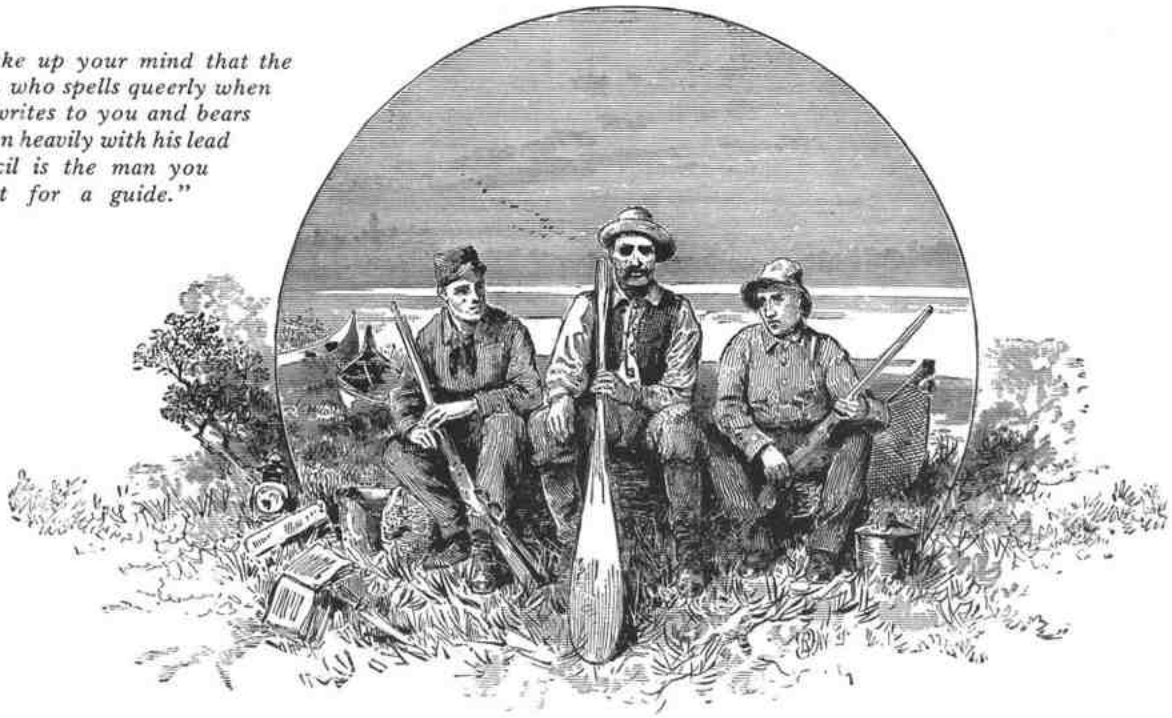
that it appeared even in the writing of that admirable democrat, Thad Norris; and thereafter, *Cockney* was an American word as well as an English one, inevitably used as a barrier to keep the vile counter-jumpers from joining their betters at streamside. Oddly, it was even turned against Walton himself for committing the crime of bait-fishing. "This picture [Walton bait-fishing] is of a most cockney-like character, and we no more expect Piscator to soar beyond it, and to kill, for example, a salmon of twenty pounds with a single hair, than we would look to see his brother linen-draper [Walton was then thought to have been a linen-draper] John Gilpin, leading a charge of hussars. What is there, we ask, that relieves the low character, we had almost said the vulgarity, of a picture so little elevated and so homely? It is the exquisite simplicity of the good old man . . ." (Sir Walter Scott in his review of Davy's *Salmonia* in *The Quarterly Review*, 1828.) "Exquisite simplicity" would appear to be a coding of "knowing his place", rather as *law and order* was recently a coding of *middle-class-white security*.

The "cockney-like crime" of bait-fishing became, by Herbert's and Norris's time, the Cockney-like crime of trying to fly-fish (and not being able to do it) and, later still, the Cockney-like crime of not understanding the rituals of the dry fly. If, of course, lower-class fishermen kept in their place -- that is, if they did not aspire to trout and salmon, did not attempt fly fishing, did not try to climb inside the frame of the gentlemen-angler's landscape -- then they could avoid the term *Cockney* and would be merely that acceptable thing, the *coarse fisherman*. The English still use this expression. Whether it derives from the coarseness of the fish or the fisherman, I have not determined.

The Victorian Cockney, of course (in his angling sense) was a city-dweller. Indeed, the point can be made that he could have come into being only after the movement toward urbanization had begun and before it was completed -- when, that is, those who owned or felt title to rural land began to be threatened by visits from urbanites. The class implications followed shortly after, when it became clear that these offensive urbanites were people who could not afford to buy up riparian rights; their "betters" were well-hidden along the banks of the Hampshire chalk streams, where they did not give offense.

In America, another lower-class figure appeared in the gentlemen-angler's world, a picturesque Noble Savage with a quaint dialect and a down-home wit that, like those carved figures that adorn up-country gift shops, take all winter to prepare -- the guide, Leatherstocking enfeebled. Unlike Cooper's creation, he no longer dominated his surroundings, nor was he the moral measure of the piece; rather, he was a safe and picturesque illiterate who knew his place. "Make up your mind that the man who spells queerly when he writes to you and bears down heavily with his lead pencil is the man you want for a guide." (Charles Stedman Hanks, *Camp Kits and Camp Life*, 1906). Perhaps freedom from the

"Make up your mind that the man who spells queerly when he writes to you and bears down heavily with his lead pencil is the man you want for a guide."



linear restrictions of the written word make such a man a better guide, in some McLuhanesque way; on the face of it, however, Hanks' attitude, which was a common one, was simply snobbery: the semi-literate is a "simple, open fellow" who makes no attempt to intrude on his betters by becoming educated. Is it unfair to point out that hiring the man "who spells queerly . . . and bears down heavily on his lead pencil" was the surest way of guaranteeing a supply of undereducated men, who could not make a decent living doing anything else? As the Boston *Globe* writer Monty Montgomery puts it, there is a "direct and inverse relationship between the poverty of the countryside and the richness of the fishing," and as you approach the Mirimichi for the salmon, "it gets grimmer for people and better for fish . . . Someone, by not making very much money, is supporting our recreation." And it has always been so.

But it is the unusual fishing writer who mentions such matters. We are much more likely to find, especially among the Victorians, detailed histories of "our crowd", and occasional mentions of the Unacceptable Others -- guides, rubes, Cockneys, hideous poachers, and barefoot farmboys with alder poles and earthworms.

Yet they are always there, like the hidden animals in a child's puzzle: how many common people can you find in this drawing? There are thirty million licensed fishermen now; their proportionate number existed in Victoria's reign, but we must take it mostly on faith that they were there.

What I have called "The Victorian Angler", then, is partly a historical construct put together from written accounts that were socially myopic. (I am speaking mostly of books; the point could be made that the periodicals, especially in the United States, were far more egalitarian, especially under the editorship of somebody like William Porter. However, so inclusive were the periodicals that their excess of information amounts to historical overkill, and the great proportion of what they printed was self-indulgent puffery in the form of correspondence. One finds the same sort of thing, although on different subjects, in the correspondence pages of contemporary newspapers.) He emerges as a male, first of all, and then as a gentleman. He angles for gamefish, mostly trout and salmon (the tautological definition being that a gamefish is one that a gentleman may angle for) and, beyond the Alleghenies, for the black bass. After the eighteen-forties, he fishes more and more with the fly, although his tackle will not catch up with his principles until about the American Civil War, when fly and bait tackle become readily distinguishable. Once the dry fly is defined by Halford, of course, he is able to weave himself a cocoon of rules and precepts and "scientific" arguments within which he will be safe from Cockneys, coarse fishermen, and -- Gad! -- *wormers*.

I have already noted that there was an affinity between Scottish and American anglers. It led, I think, to the marked American preference for non-imitative, often gaudy flies right through the century, although, as a De Tocqueville might have predicted, the American fancies went far beyond the Scottish precedent. The affinity between the two nations sprang from a similarity of fishing grounds and angling custom; that is, there was a good deal of free and open water in both, and a very small population in their wilder region. (After 1745, Scotland was depopulated in sometimes grisly ways; the Americans typically had empty country within a short walk or ride until well into Victoria's reign.) In both nations, the taking of small fish (trout) in rather large numbers was the rule, in broken water and in lakes; the (Southern) English practice was to take, or try to take, larger fish, and not by the basket, but by the brace.

American thinking was conditioned in favor of a romanticized Hibernianism by Burns and Sir Walter Scott; Scott's novels, particularly, were aped by Cooper and by such lesser hacks as Henry Herbert ("Frank Forester"), so American anglers were easily made readers of the two outstanding Scots angling writers of the nineteenth century, John Wilson ("Christopher North") and Thomas Tod Stoddart. North in *Blackwood's* Magazine (which had a North American readership) and Stoddart in several books gave their particular luster to American angling. Both were poets and their approach to fishing problems was "poetic" -- intuitive, aesthetic, "natural" in a

Romantic sense; the southern English approach, as the century advanced, became "scientific", analytical, governed by the Victorian ideal of utility. The operative English angling words were *modern* and *practical*, and the expression *scientific angler* represented an ideal. But the most famous fly pattern in America until at least 1880 was the "Professor", a simple, non-imitative fly popularized by "Christopher North" and so named because he (Wilson) was Professor of Moral Philosophy at Edinburgh; it would be difficult to name a single pattern as most popular in England, but after 1836 it would have been one based on Ronalds or at least on Ronalds' idea of exact imitation. After Halford, of course, there was no contest.

The poetic Scots and American angler, however dedicated to catching fish, fit his angling into a larger sense of Nature, and his flies (or worms or parr-tail) like his poems were expressions of his own response rather than expressions of any purely rational analysis of a situation -- they were flights of fancy. The scientific English angler surrounded his fishing with the trappings of modernity and method, and his flies were expressions of observation and of his and his colleagues' responses to objectively-observed fact -- increasingly strict imitations. Both the English and the Scottish-American attitudes sprang from an abiding affection for nature, but one is an outsider's affection (the English urbanite's) and the other is the native's or the very recently dispossessed countryman's. Neither is "better", and of course what I have called the English view has necessarily become our own as we have become so oppressively urbanized, but the Scottish-American, perhaps because it was a Romantic and a poetic and a fundamentally simpler way of looking at the natural world, is a very appealing one now.

Not the least of the reasons for this appeal is that it encapsulates a view that has vanished. Our Victorian forbears, when they went fishing, had the advantage of us. They had not merely the advantage of more productive waters, of uncrowded woods and untrafficked roads (or no roads at all); they had also a sense of wonder and of belonging, of coming home to nature in its dazzling magnificence. I am not sure that we can ever understand that homecoming; we can yearn for it, stand spiritually next to it, but I do not think we can quite get inside it. We are more dispossessed than any Victorian ever dreamed of being. Battered by our technical achievements, dulled by our ugly cities and our Disneyland copies of reality, we cannot be lucky enough to know the surge of joy that must have been theirs when they encountered natural splendor.

One may smile at the Victorian virgins as they plied their pallid watercolors in attempts to catch the natural landscape, but the smile should be followed by a frown of at least puzzlement as we admit that their act was more expressive of genuine contact with nature than is our own: the abrupt stop at the mountain turn-out, the bolting from the car with the camera, the quick tripping of the shutter and the rush to the next vista. We look. They understood. So did their angling fathers.

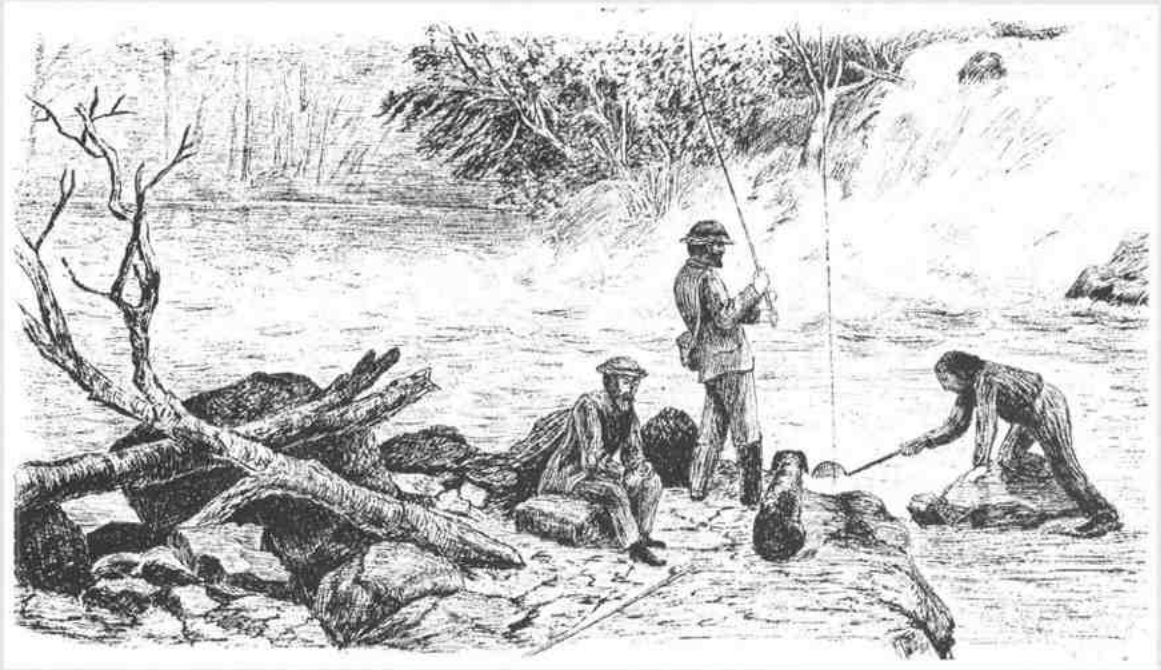
If I had the choice, I would make my next fishing trip either to the Catskill streams in the eighteen-fifties or to the Tweed in the eighteen-twenties. I would choose, in other words, to be an early Victorian angler. Not because the fishing was that much better (although it often was) but because, despite what I have said above about snobbery and narrow-mindedness, I firmly believe that the fishermen were better -- better people, I mean. Perhaps they were better only because their consciousness was more open to nature -- but is that not enough?

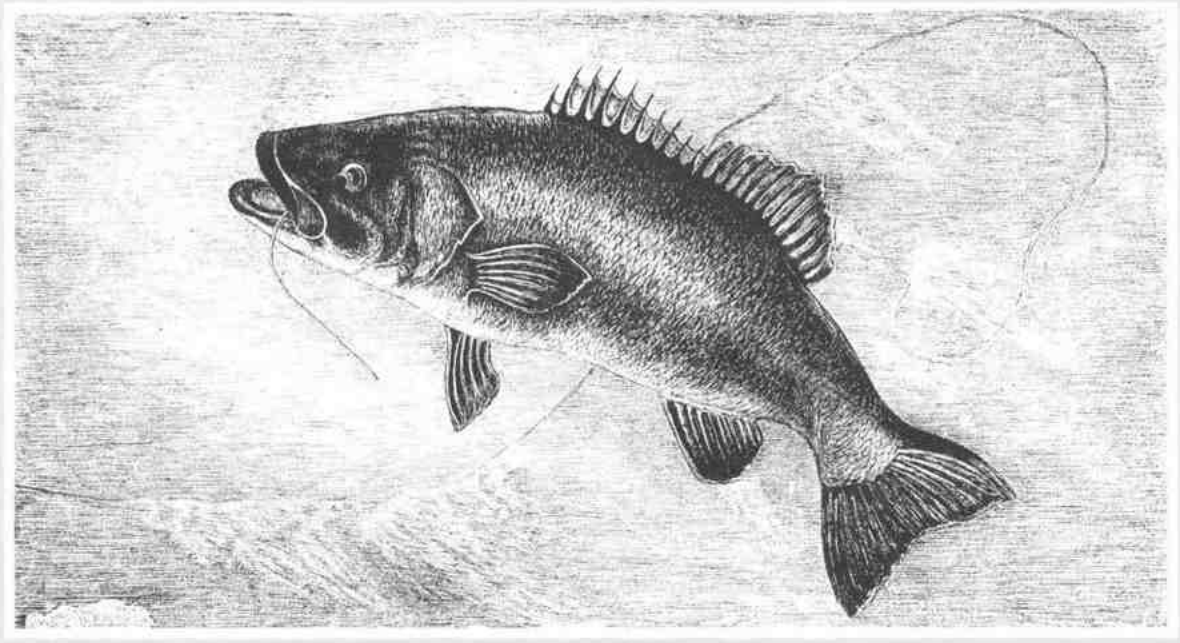
For what they seemed to be able to find in nature was not mere inspiration, not pathetic fallacy, but symbolic proof of an ideal of the spirit. Their painters left records of it -- the Hudson River painters in the east, in Kaaterskill Clove and Lake George; Catlin in the Indian West; Audubon in the nation's birds and animals; Bierstadt in the Rockies. The best of their angling writers left their own reflections of it -- Norris on "The Solitary Angler"; Wilson and Stoddart on the wild Highlands; Cutcliffe (although he is a little later) on something as simple as the best furs for fly-tying.

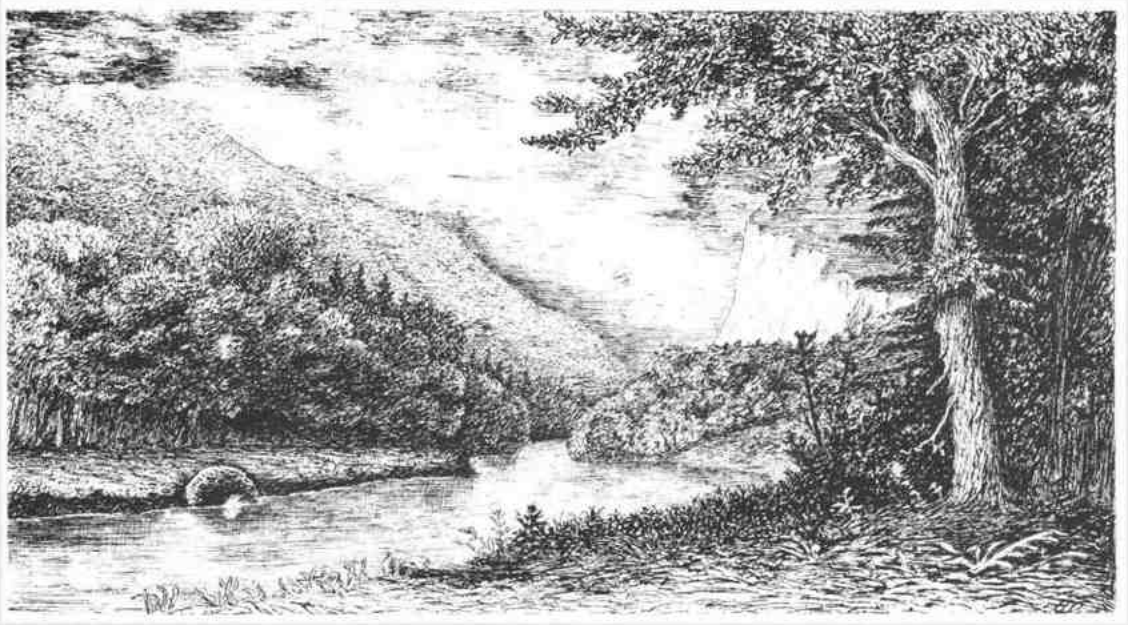
Take it all and all, then, to be a Victorian angler was a good thing.

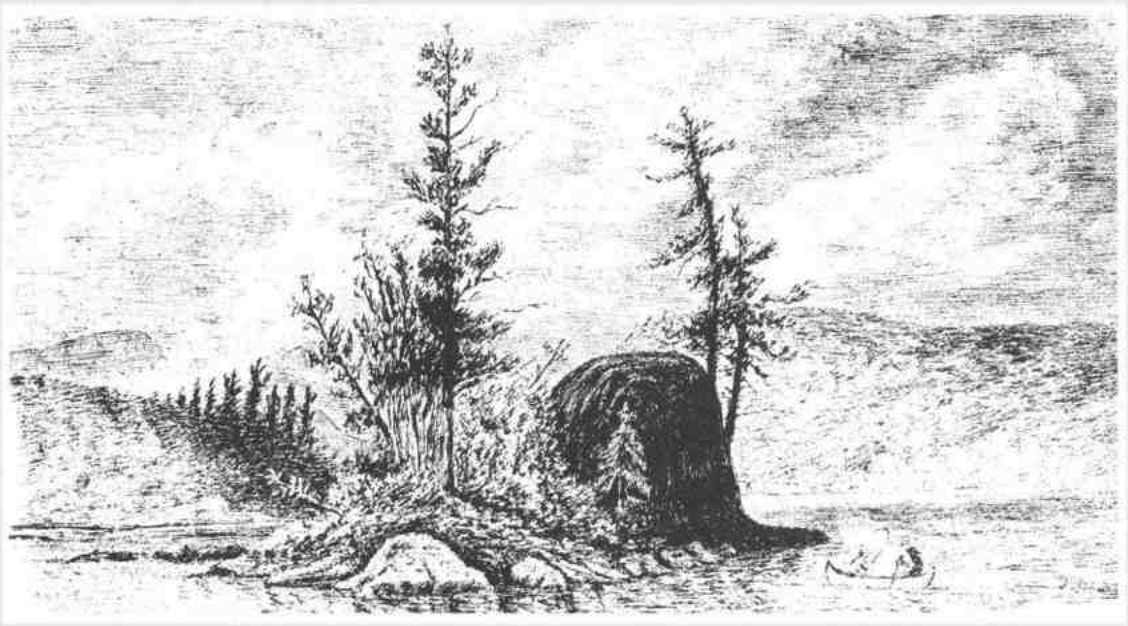
The Illustrated Angler

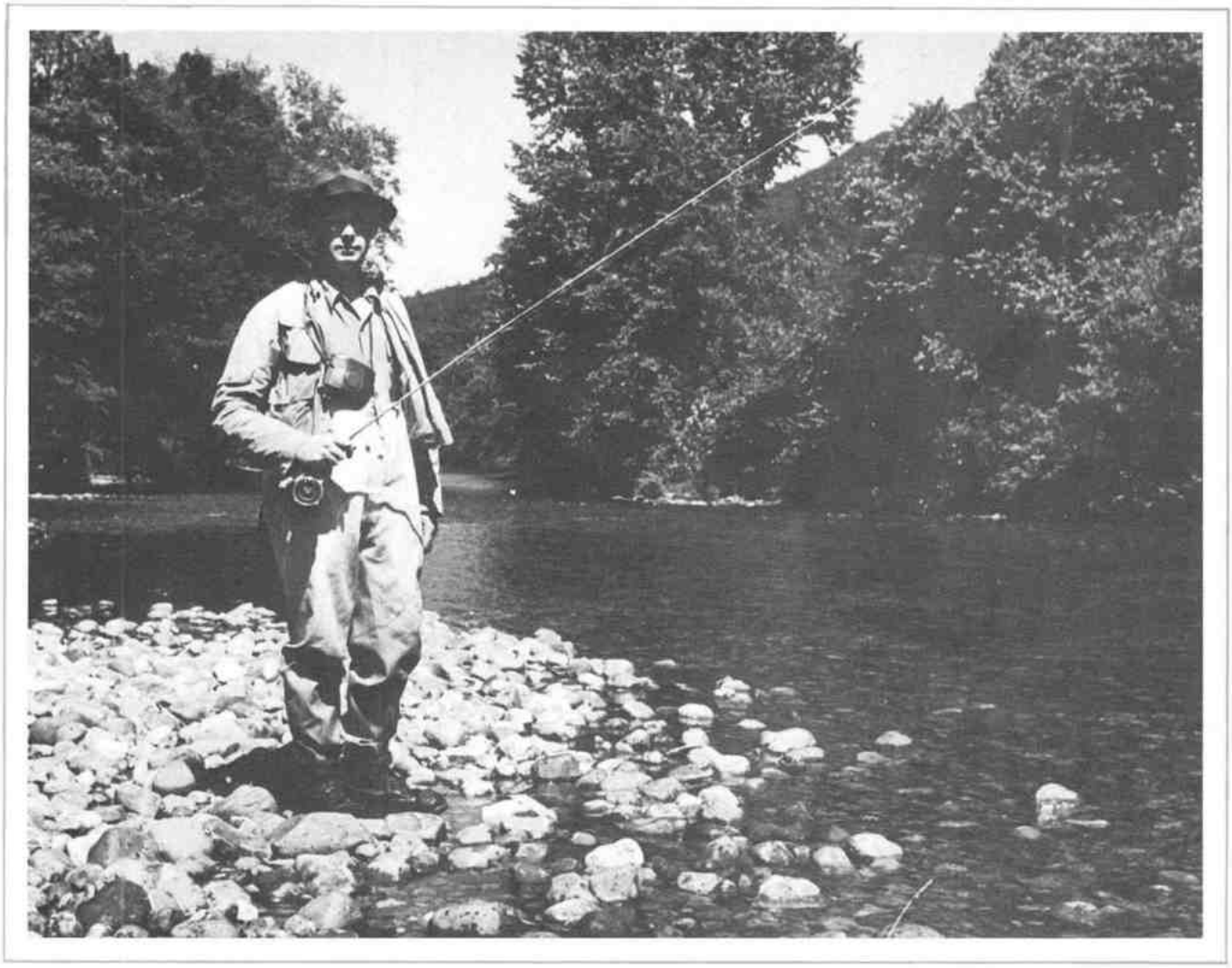
We recently received a donation of fly books from Lindley Eberstadt of New Jersey, among which was an illustrated fly book containing 168 wet flies and seven superb pen and ink drawings on bound-in leaves of heavy parchment. We have not yet identified the artist, and hope perhaps one of our readers will recognize the initials B.D., which appear on some of the drawings. They are dated from the 1880's, and constitute one of the most exciting and unusual art acquisitions of record in this museum. We reprint six of them here (the other is a hunting scene). Some readers will recognize the black bass, apparently copied from earlier publications; it also appeared in Dr. Henshall's BOOK OF THE BLACK BASS (embossed on the cover) and on some William Mills Catalogs, in almost exact duplicate.











Atherton Impressions

by Tom Rosenbauer

On September 15, 1952, a well-known commercial and fine artist named John Atherton was fishing the Miramichi in New Brunswick for salmon. With him was his wife, Maxine, and their guide, Herman Campbell. Mr. Campbell was one of the first "locals" on the Miramichi to fish with flies and to tie his own flies.

Fishing was slow, but Mr. Atherton finally killed a large fish. Moments later he complained to Mr. Campbell of chest pains, waded ashore, and collapsed. He died a short time later, "with his waders on," a wish which was expressed to Maxine years earlier. At the untimely age of 52, the fly fishing world had lost one of its most eloquent spokesmen.

Atherton tinkered with fly lines, leaders, and rod design (he was a decided influence on Pinky Gillum's rod designs), but he is best remembered for his "impressionistic" theory of fly tying. His one book, *The Fly and the Fish* (MacMillan, 1951; Freshet, 1971) introduced his theory with a listing of seven dries, three nymphs, and five wet flies of his own design. These flies are to trout flies what the classic British featherwings are to salmon flies, though their design is much more pragmatic.

Atherton's fly patterns were not earth-shaking in form. Just as Atherton the artist used a canvas and paints as his boundaries and developed an image with their realm, he took the traditional forms of dry flies, nymphs, and wet flies, then developed an image with vibrance and life by carefully choosing the color and texture of materials. As he stated in *The Fly and the Fish*:

> "As impressionistic color in flies is more apt to suggest life than solid tones, an impressionistic outline or silhouette suggests life more than a sharp outline. The trout sees the fly either against the sky (through his window) or under the surface of the water, in which latter case it is seen either against the shimmering undersurface or the stream bottom, depending on whether the fly is above or below the fish.
>
> In any case, the fly should

Above, and on previous page: John Atherton on the Battenkill. All black and white photographs courtesy of Maxine Atherton. Right: The color plate of dry flies from THE FLY AND THE FISH and a matching set of original Atherton flies.

have a silhouette typical of the natural. The insect on the surface reflects light from both the sky and the water, as well as the bottom of the stream. This makes for a changeable, indistinct and soft outline which is further broken by frequent movements of the fly's legs and wings. The materials used in fly tying decide impressionistic form by their texture. Materials used for bodies should provide the soft outline suggestive of movement which only soft and translucent materials can give. There should never be a hard outline; even the wings appear more natural if they are broken up in silhouette."

Atherton's dry fly number four shows the use of mixed colors to obtain an overall impression of the "Hendrickson" group of *Ephemerella* mayflies:

"TAIL	Cree hackle barbules, or a mixture of ginger and grizzly.
BODY	Natural seal's fur mixed with dyed red seal, a little hare's ear and a little muskrat fur. The color should be a grayed, mixed pink. Ribbed with narrow oval gold tinsel.
WINGS	Wood duck preferably, or light-colored mandarin speckled side feathers.
HACKLE	A mixture of one cree hackle and one medium natural dun.

This fly will approximate certain pinkish-bodied naturals, and is even useful for some of the spinners with pink or reddish bodies.

HOOK SIZES 16, 14, 12."

His own dry fly patterns, numbered 1 thru 7, range from very pale to dark dun in general coloration. All use hackle of mixed colors—cree and dun, ginger and cree, or ginger and dun. His wing material reflect the texture more than the color of a mayfly's wings—Wood Duck, Bali Duck, or pale glossy hackle points. Body materials are all mixtures of various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"buggy" translucent furs, to give a delicate, animated image. His favorites were hare's ear (with plenty of small speckled guard hairs), and seal's fur, with muskrat, fox, and mole to add the more somber colors and to provide a binder for the dubbing mixture.

Atherton was also fascinated by spiders and variants. Quite likely this was because of the influence on him by George LaBranche and Edward Hewitt. His interest in these airy little hackle and tinsel attractors is exemplified by his devotion of an entire chapter of *The Fly and the Fish* to "Fishing with Spiders and Variants." In fact, he devoted the entire 1946 fishing season to using nothing else. His conclusion: "I was thoroughly convinced of one thing—that if I had to be limited to one dry fly it would be the spider, without any doubt . . . Now that the experiment is off my chest, I certainly would not care to repeat it. It is much more fun to carry a variety of flies . . ."

The Angler's Club of New York Bulletin of October 1952 (the same issue in which Atherton's obituary appeared) included an article by Atherton which was probably intended to be an outline of a chapter in his second book. The article, entitled "On the Vision of Trout" delves into the subject of a trout's vision and what he perceives:

> "The artificial fly itself proves that the trout's interpretation of form is defective, because the hook is so obviously visible. No fly, no matter how beautifully dressed, can depend on utter realism for success due to the hook. Many wet flies are so lightly and thinly dressed that the hook is horribly apparent. Yet these flies are taken readily by trout, and beneath the surface where their vision is most acute.
>
> If we accept the theory that form-vision is defective and color vision important, we may design our flies more from the point of view of "workability" than of realism. For example, most of our nymphs are made with flattened bodies to imitate the crawling and clambering types which frequent our streams. Building a nymph in this manner is considerably more difficult and complicated than tying one with a simple rounded body. The labored construction, often with gills, setae, and legs of carefully realistic form and material seems to me unnecessary.
>
> When the trout sees a nymph under water, frequently with one rather than both eyes, it is accustomed to the impression of form made by habitual experience. Unless the nymph is constantly twisting or turning it is viewed from one side or the other only and with a predominately two-dimensional effect. Whether the nymph is flat or not would matter little unless the trout swam around it and looked it over from several angles."

Top: John Atherton with California bass, about 1928. Middle: A lighter moment at an Angler's Club Outing. Bottom: A Klamath River steelhead, about 1948.

Atherton's nymph number two (medium color) reveals how he practiced his theories of form and color:

"TAIL	Three short strands from the long tail feather of the cock pheasant (ringneck).
BODY	Hare's ear, tied rough and ribbed with narrow oval gold tinsel. After ribbing, the dubbing is picked out between the ribs with a dubbing needle to suggest the gills of the nymph and to add a softer outline.
THORAX	Same dubbing over padding or fuse wire. Before winding on this dubbing, the wing case feather is tied in at the back of the thorax, upside down and pointing to the tail of the fly.
WING CASES	Bright blue feather from wing of English kingfisher, lacquered when in place. This feather, although exactly what I need to suggest the sparkle of color or light on the wing cases, is apt to come apart after some use. I have tried to find a proper substitute and so far the best is a bit of synthetic silk floss, of the same or nearly the same color, heavily lacquered after tying in. It is permanent, but not as bright and sparkling as the feather.

When the wing-case feather or silk has been tied in at the rear of the thorax, wind on the dubbing for the thorax and then bring the wing-case feather forward over the back (or belly, as the case may be) and tie in at the head.

HACKLE	European partridge, either the gray or brown speckled hackle feather. These partridge hackles are also a rather fragile feather, and the fibres are apt to break off quickly if roughly used. I have sometimes substituted a cree hackle for this nymph as well as others, and although I do not like the color and texture quite as well as the partridge, it seems to be about as effective.
HOOK SIZES	14, 12, 10, 8."

Atherton admitted that he preferred to use a nymph rather than a wet fly when fishing below the surface. He developed three patterns (light, medium, and dark) of rather simple construction, since he often fished them close to the banks, and lost them quite frequently. His nymphs follow the principle established by his dry flies, that a mixed, impressionistic color obtained with fuzzy, translucent materials is best.

All of Atherton's fly patterns—dry, wet, and nymph—used fine oval gold tinsel as a rib. The tinsel was meant to add a bit of glitter and a suggestion of segmentation to the body. Atherton also admitted a concession to utilitarianism:

> "It is a great help in keeping the dubbing from being chewed off . . . No doubt silver would serve the same purpose but I prefer gold, just for personal reasons. Flat tinsel is too weak; it breaks easily. And wire is so fine one is barely conscious of any color at all . . . "

His unique use of a bright blue wing case is explained in "On the Vision of Trout:"

> "I have experimented with small, sparkling blue feathers as wing cases on nymphs and find they kill very well. The blue is used as contrast to the dubbing when the latter is of hare's ear or seal's fur dyed yellow, orange or olive. To my own eyes, looking down into the water, the small blue flash is remarkably strong and bright. Against light it naturally loses in contrast. But as I often fish my nymphs deep and up from the bottom or under overhanging foliage, the trout will usually see the fly against a dark background."

The Fly and the Fish, with its superb color plates of flies and delicate highlight halftones, immediately accepts the reader as a lifetime friend of the author. Atherton's one book is a culmination of a lifetime of fly fishing experience, artistic experimentation, and friendship with many of the great fly fishing minds of the thirties and fourties.

John Atherton was born June 7, 1900 in Brainard, Minnesota. His parents moved to the state of Washington, where he attended high school. As a teenager, Atherton worked for a gentleman named L. R. Dolby, who pioneered the use of advertising signs which told how many miles it was to Spokane. Atherton would travel the roads in a little truck with a shovel, the signs, and a fly rod. If he worked hard and fast enough, the nearest trout stream would provide his evening's reward.

The Museum of American Fly Fishing has in its possession a scrapbook in which Atherton, as a teenager, meticulously pasted current fishing articles. The content was mainly "how to" articles by such long-forgotton writers as "Outdoors W. Smith," "Virginius," "RLM," and Ladd Plumley.

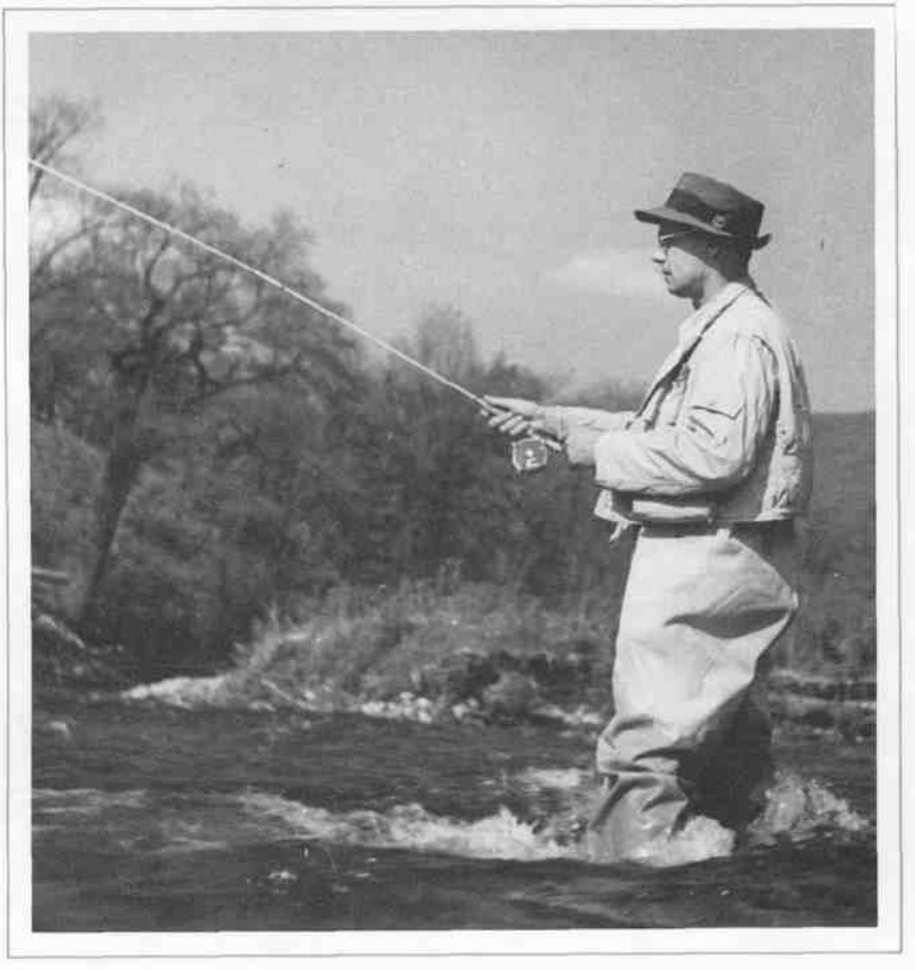
Atherton joined the navy when he was seventeen (lied about his age) but was discharged soon after the Armistice in 1918. He then went to the College of the Pacific, and later to the California School of Fine Arts in San Francisco. In 1926 he married Maxine Breese, who he had met at the art school.

After his graduation, he stayed in San Francisco until 1929, working for an advertising agency. His career occupied most of his time, but there was often time to slip off to the local bass lakes or the Merced River for trout.

Just prior to the stock market crash in 1929, the Athertons moved to New York. Atherton apparently prospered during the 1930's and 40's, as he was involved in national advertising campaigns for General Motors, Shell Oil, and Container Corporation.

His art work also appeared on the covers of magazines such as *Holiday*, *Fortune*, *True*, and *The Saturday Evening Post*. One *Saturday Evening Post* cover showed a fisherman trying his luck in the falls beneath the Monroe Street Bridge in Spokane. The angler pictured was Atherton as a teenager.

Atherton apparently became prosperous enough to move to Connecticut during the 1940's. It was during this



John Atherton's devotion to Pinky Gillum's rods was exceeded only by his devotion to superb tackle in general. Mrs. Atherton has donated no less than **five** *Gillums used by her and her late husband; three are pictured here. From the left, an 8 ft. rod for 7- or 8-weight line, used for trout and salmon; a 9 ft. salmon rod; and an 8½ ft. salmon rod. The 9 ft. rod on the right was built by E. C. Powell, renowned California rodbuilder and one of the very few craftsmen whose work is compared to Gillum's.*

The reels are a Hardy Perfect (far left), a Hardy Flyweight (above), and an Edward Hewitt original, one of the Museum's most cherished reels. The Hewitt reel was also shown in Volume 6, Number 1, and we understand from Maxine that its biography is quite unusual. Hewitt built it especially for her, one of a very few he made for friends, and she carried it on many trout fishing adventures.

period, and later when he lived on the Battenkill in Vermont, that he devoted the majority of his time to trout and salmon fishing, and fly tying.

It was at this time that Atherton became a fishing companion of many of the great angler/writers of that era. While he lived in Ridgefield, Connecticut, he met Pinkie Gillum, and the two collaborated on fly rod design. Maxine Atherton feels that "John had as much to do with the action of the Gillum rods as did Pinkie."

Atherton also fished and corresponded with George La Branche, Harry and Elsie Darbee, John MacDonald, and Lee Wulff. The Museum of American Fly Fishing is in possession of a letter written to Atherton from Charles De Feo, describing some of De Feo's salmon fly designs. Atherton later included the flies in a chapter of *The Fly and the Fish*.

Another fascinating piece of correspondence in the Museum collection is Wendell "Tom" Collins's letter and sketches to Atherton describing his famous "hardback" and "softback" nymphs. Although Atherton did not agree with this realistic type of nymph design, it is a tribute to his open-minded attitude that he devoted a large part of his chapter on nymphs to Collins's designs.

Perhaps the greatest influence on Atherton's fishing was Edward Hewitt. There are photographs in Atherton's personal photograph album showing Hewitt fishing on one of his famous pools on the Neversink. Atherton is in the background carefully observing—obviously the pupil. Atherton and Hewitt would spend days together in Hewitt's house in New York City, tinkering and peering upward through aquariums at dry flies, checking Atherton's theory on the "light pattern." When Hewitt's house on the Neversink burned, Atherton, still in his fishing waders, rushed into the house to save Hewitt who had entered the burning structure to save some of his possessions.

During his later years, Atherton made frequent salmon fishing trips to the Cains and Miramichi. He also traveled west for steelhead and Pacific salmon. It is interesting to note that although Atherton fished for brook trout in both Maine and Labrador, his writing mentions only the highly selective brown trout. Apparently the gullible brookie was not a sufficient challenge for an angler of Atherton's caliber.

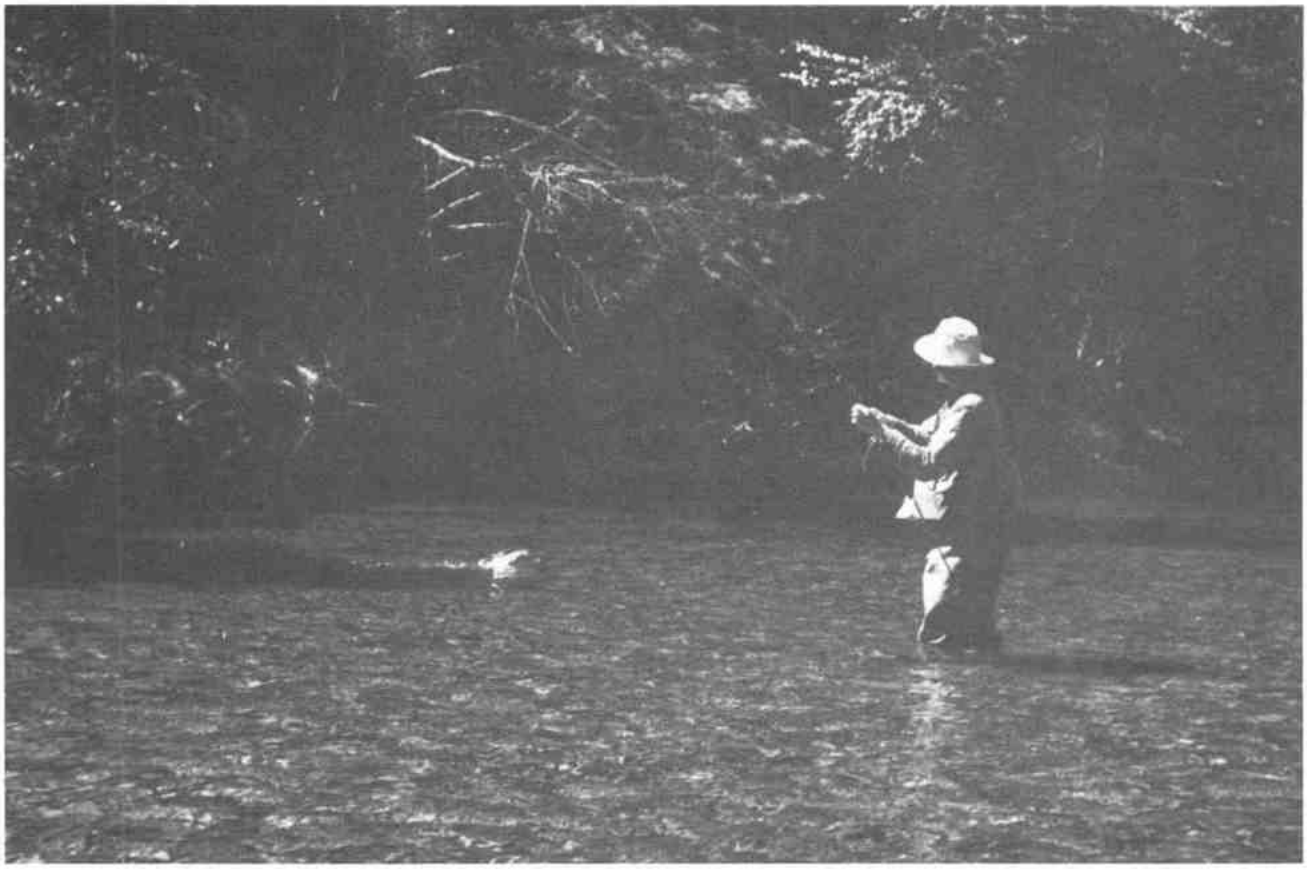
It is apparent to any serious Battenkill fly fisher that Atherton's fly designs were influenced greatly by the extremely difficult brown trout of this river. Although the flies were meant to imitate general families of mayflies, they are perfect for the seasonal progression of hatches on this river. Atherton lived on the banks of the Battenkill during his last years, and his neighbors still remark that "all that man did was fish!"

After his death on the Miramichi, Maxine, Lee Wulff, and Walter Squires buried his ashes under the root of a young maple tree, beside a pool on the Battenkill from which he caught and released a large brown trout each year he lived there.

Maxine still fishes for salmon each year on the Miramichi, and after John's death continued his eternal enthusiasm for the sport, traveling from the chalk streams of France and to the rugged cutthroat streams of Wyoming and Montana. A fitting tribute to his influence is the last line in her introduction to the second printing of *The Fly and the Fish*:

> "And instead of lighting an eternal flame on Jack's grave I have been supporting in every way possible any movement which strives to conserve—or bring back to this Earth all which ruthless pillage destroyed—the magic Jack extolled."

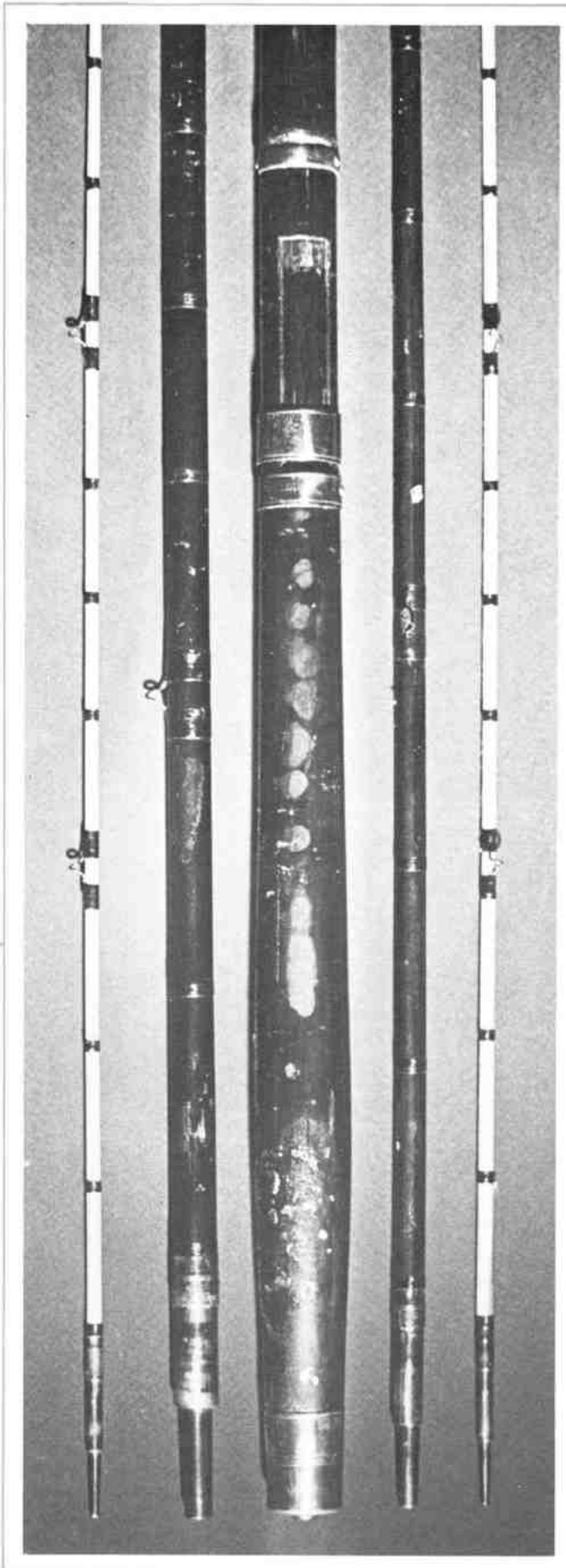
Maxine Atherton on the Battenkill, around 1950.

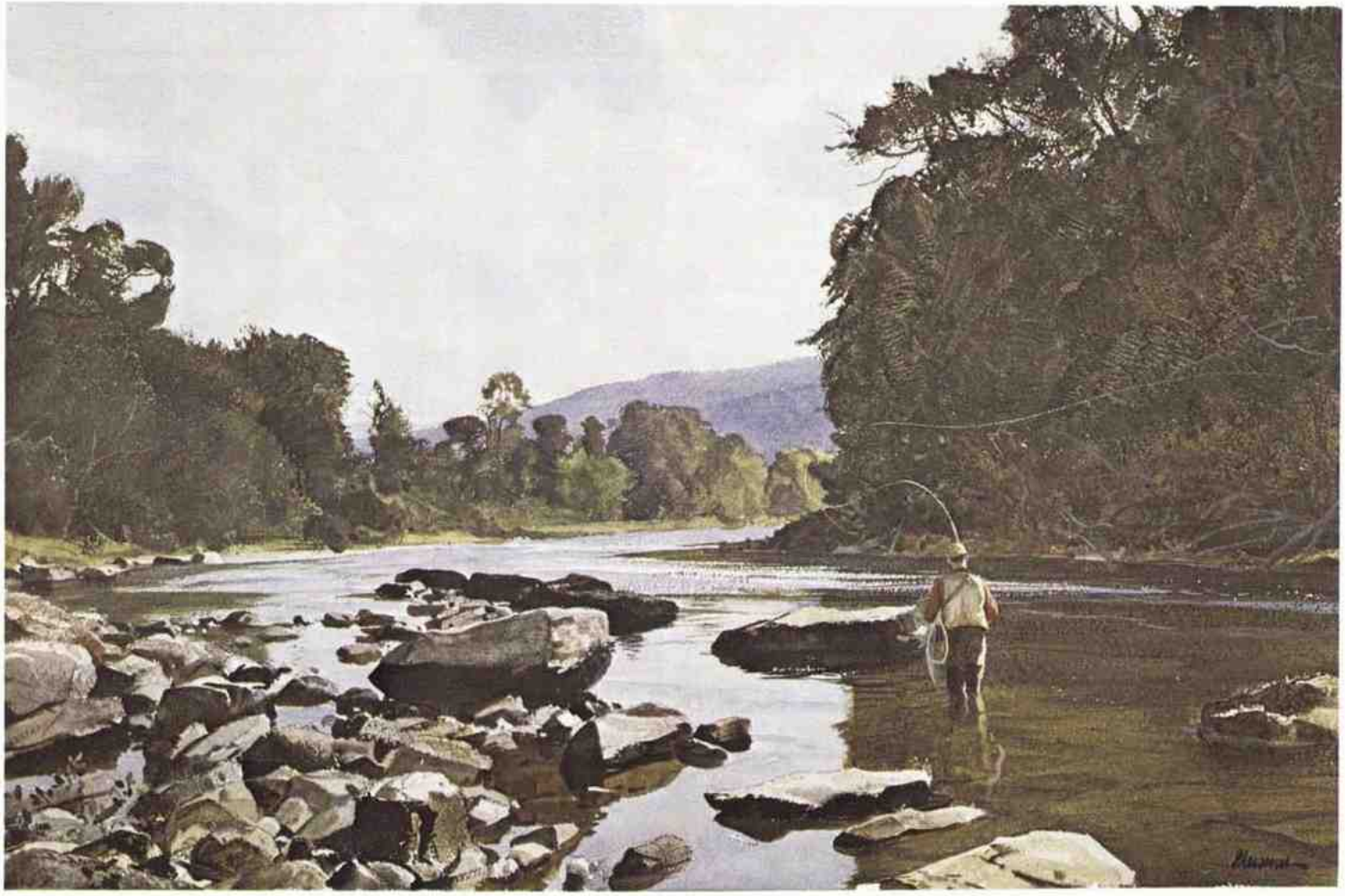


Salmon Rod 1852

Fly fishing for Atlantic Salmon seems to have gotten a slow start in North America; even in the 1830's it was commonly believed American salmon would not take a fly. This 16 ft. rod, our oldest known-age salmon rod, tells us of a 21½ pound salmon caught on the Godbout, a river on the North Shore of the St. Lawrence, in 1852. We know that fly fishing was practiced on that river as early as 1845, by Colonel Sir James Alexander, and the river (often spelled "Goodbout") was mentioned in several 19th century books as a good producer.

The small plaque pictured below is located high on the butt section, and it reads "God Bout Rivr. 21½ lbs. July 6th, 1852." Since the rod now has modern snake guides, we assume it has been revitalized sometime since it was honored with the plaque. It was recently donated to the Museum by Samuel Webb, of Shelburne, Vermont.





Hendrickson's Pool - Beaverkill

"Hendrickson's Pool – Beaverkill" is a new print from Ogden Pleissner, perhaps the foremost outdoor artist in America. Through a special arrangement with the artist, The Museum of American Fly Fishing will receive 20 copies of this print for fund-raising purposes. We will be offering more than one copy at our New York Auction this March 18. More information on the auction can be found on page 32, and all Museum members will soon receive invitations.

Many members will recall that it was through a similar gift from Mr. Pleissner, of his print of "Lye Brook Pool," that the Museum was first established on a firm financial footing ten years ago. This new scene is an especially appropriate one for us, since it depicts one of American fly fishing's most historic rivers.

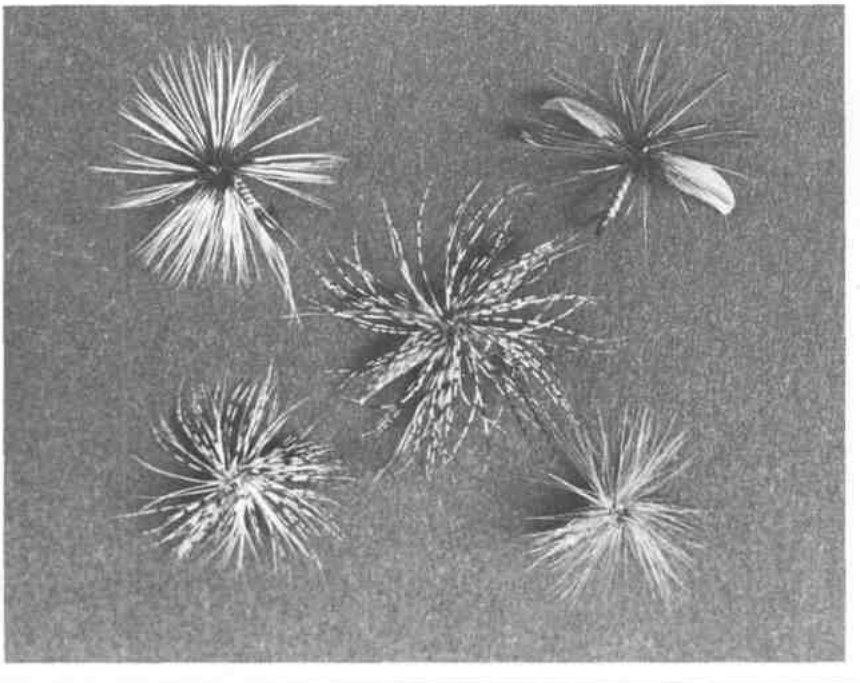
Parachute Pioneers

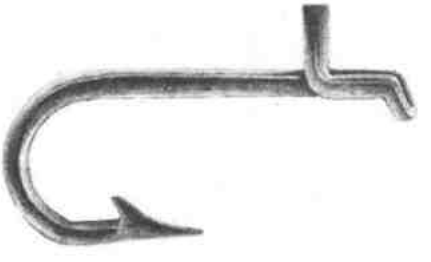
by Joseph Spear Beck

Sometime ago I was given one of the original Pre-World War II Alex Martin "Parachute Flies" with the U.K. Patent Number slip attached. The firm of Alex Martin, of Glasgow, is no longer in existence, having been merged with the firm of John Dickson & Son, Ltd., in the early 1960's.

I am donating this fly to the Museum, and with it I send a copy of the Alex Martin catalog for 1950 and an extract from the Alex Martin catalog of 1938. The 1938 catalog positively establishes the date of introduction of the parachute fly into the United Kingdom as 1933:

> "Introduced in 1933 to the anglers of Britain and the Colonies by Alex Martin, Glasgow, Edinburgh, Aberdeen, Stirling, and improved each season since. Now the range is extended to include not only a useful variety of trout, but also sea trout, salmon, low water salmon and Mayflies which can be used wet or dry, including varieties with grass bodies." (page 54)





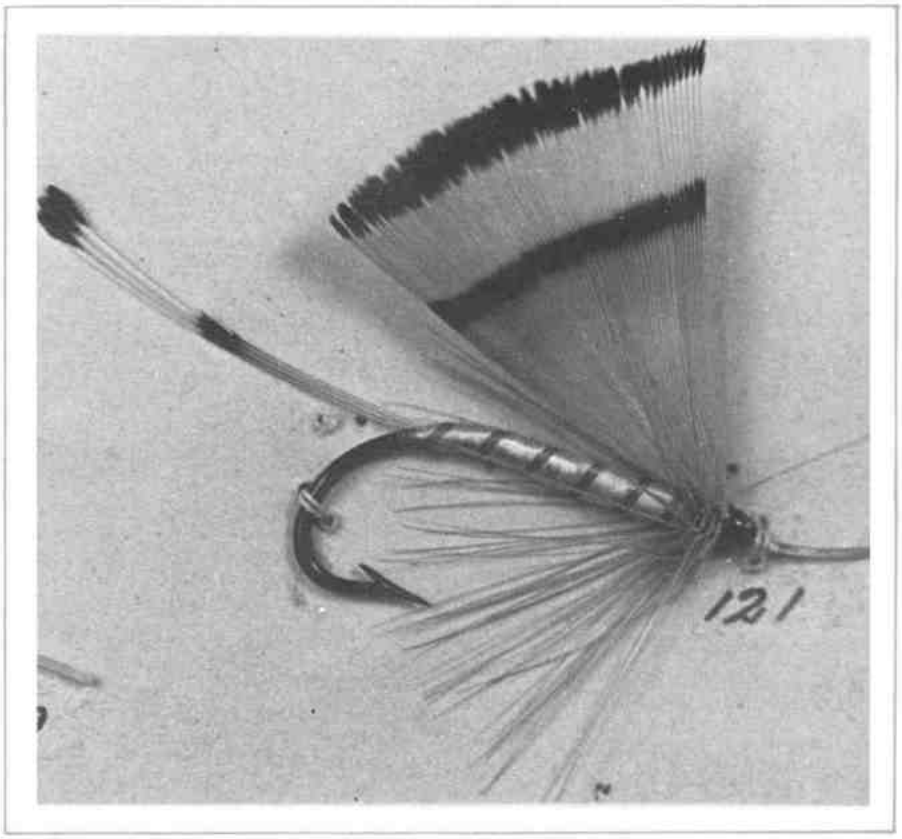
Above: some Alex Martin parachute flies from the Museum Collection. Right: the Brush patent hook, as drawn by K.J.J. O'Leary.

Harold "Dike" Smedley, in his book *Fly Patterns and Their Origins,* stated that the parachute fly was "the invention of William A. Brush of motor car fame, Detroit, Michigan. The application was made 4/16/31 and the patent granted 9/11/34, being number 1,973,139."

However, John Dickson & Son, Ltd., in a note dated 1970, while crediting the parachute as an American invention, was of the opinion that it was first marketed about 1928 in the United States but that no company in this country thought it was worth pursuing. How wrong they were is history now.

However if this 1928 date is correct, it leads to other conjectures. First, that Brush didn't decide to patent his "invention" until he found out it was commercially worthwhile. Second, that he may not have been the designer at all but obtained the rights and applied for the patent.

We might add to Joe's report that the patent held by William Brush applied to the unusual hook design he used, which featured a short upward projection just back of the eye. It was on this projection that the early parachute hackle was wrapped. More recent dressings, of course, wrap the hackle at the base of the wing material. Do any of our readers have more on the early development of the parachute they can share with us?



The "old" Cahill, as it appeared in Marbury's book.

The Case of the Two Cahills

by Charles Brooks

We are not speaking here of the regular or Dark Cahill and the Light Cahill, although we will plow some of that ground, but rather of the Irish Cahill pattern and the American pattern of the same name.

For many years - back into the 1880's at least - there has been confusion about the origin of the Cahill trout fly. Some proponents insisted that the fly was of Irish origin, while others just as strongly declared that it was an American pattern and had nothing to do with the ould sod. Both sides were right - they were just talking about two totally different flies with the same name.

A good example of the confusion over the two flies appeared in *The American Fly Fisher* just recently (Vol. 6, No. 2). In the piece entitled *An Angler's Notes on the Beaverkill,* written for Louis Rhead's book *The Speckled Brook Trout* (1902) by Benjamin Kent, the author writes as follows: "In my opinion the Cahill is the best fly on the Beaverkill; it was the best when I first fished the stream, and it is the best today." And later, in the same paragraph "But that book (*Famous Flies,* below) must not be a guide to the Cahill, as Fig. 121 in *Favorite Flies* is a very different fly. Fig. 118 is more like a Cahill, possibly it is a typographical error in giving 121 instead of 118."

Kent's discussion of the most taking flies of the period, in the same paragraph as the above information, make it quite clear that he is speaking of the American pattern.

In her marvelous book, *Favorite Flies and their Histories* (1892), Mary Orvis Marbury says that she has heard that the Cahill is an American pattern but that John Shields wrote her "the Cahill was named after a Dublin fly maker of that name, who would occasionally, after making a fly, put it to the writer's ear and inquire if I heard it buzz."

Marbury then goes on to say that she is confident Mr. Shields is correct in his statement of its birthplace. She pictures the fly as number 121, Plate 0 in her book and one look at the plate would tell any knowledgeable American fly fisher that this was <u>not</u> the Cahill he knows.

She was correct in placing her confidence in John Shields. Shields was born in County Monahan, Ireland in 1832, migrated to Brookline, Massachusetts about 1862 and became one of the most respected fly tyers and tackle makers of his time. He knew both the maker and the origin of the Irish Cahill fly, and thus is a first hand source on its origin. Unfortunately, he is about the only first hand source we will deal with in this piece.

While the origin and maker of the Irish fly can be verified, with the American version, evidence on these two points is much fuzzier. Neither the time nor the maker can be pinned down with surety although the place of origin is pretty well known to be southeastern New York.

Part of the problem of locating the American Cahill in time is caused by the presence of the Irish fly. All the early mention of a Cahill fly leaves it there; there is no description nor is the maker or place of origin named.

Preston Jennings in *A Book of Trout Flies* (1935) says that he found mention of the Cahill in Wakeman Holberton's *The Art of Angling* (1887) but he does not say <u>which</u> Cahill nor indicate that Holberton does. This blithe assumption that there is only one Cahill has complicated attempts to pin down the American version and has frustrated researchers because all pre 1890 writings and most since take the same casual position. In the case of Holberton, however, one can safely assume that the Irish Cahill is the fly meant for he was a brook trout fisher and an exponent of very gaudy flies, and the Irish Cahill with its bright green hackle, golden pheasant tippet wing and tail and gold tinsel ribbed yellow floss body is a very gaudy fly indeed.

Speaking of the American pattern, Jennings - without qualification - says that the fly was originally a dark pattern which was tied in a much lighter version

by Theodore Gordon and that William Chandler of Neversink, N.Y., created the modern Light Cahill from Gordon's version. But he is mute on the origin and maker of the original (dark) Cahill.

H. H. (Dike) Smedley clears away a lot of the fog in his little *Fly Patterns and their Origins* (1942). He states unequivocally that the fly was named after the man that created it, Dan Cahill. Cahill, he says, was a brakeman on the Erie Railroad working out of Port Jervis, New York. He says that Cahill was a friend of Edward Hewitt and often fished with him. He quotes C. Russell MacGregor, a prominent fly fisherman of the day as saying that he last saw Dan Cahill about 1910 at which time he was regarded as the outstanding fishing authority around Mast Hope. Smedley gives no dressing for the fly and no time of origin. And Smedley does not say how he came by the information.

The earliest dressing I can find in my own books is in Bergman's *Just Fishing* (1932). According to him, the pattern is: tail, speckled wood duck, body, blue-grey (dun) fur, wings, speckled wood duck, hackle, brown. Bergman indicates he used the fly as both a wet and a dry, but includes no information on its origin, or date of same. However, the implication is that he was fishing it in the early - to - mid 1900-1920 period. In *Trout* (1938) he says his use of the fly dates back to his very early fishing days and that would be 1910 or earlier. And according to *The American Fly Fisher* article mentioned earlier, Benjamin Kent had been using the American Cahill some years prior to 1902. This is the earliest I can find anyone actually using the fly.

In his *The Compleat Brown Trout* (1974), Cecil Heacox repeats Smedley's information about Dan Cahill, but goes on to say that he thought Theodore Gordon originated the Light Cahill. However, he said, Roy Steenrod, who knew both Gordon and William Chandler, and perhaps Cahill, insisted that the originator was Chandler, a neighbor of Gordon's, who lived in Neversink, N.Y.

The earliest mention I can find of a Cahill fly was in Charles F. Orvis' Catalogue #16 (circa 1888) but there is no description and as Orvis' daughter, Mary Orvis Marbury mentions and displays the Irish Cahill in *Famous Flies,* the implication is that the catalogue fly is the Irish version. Orvis Catalogue #26 (circa 1905) carries a list of dry flies but no Cahill under that listing.

The William Mills Catalogue of 1894 carries a Cahill pattern - no picture or description - as a snelled wet fly, at the nostalgic price of 1.00 dollar a dozen. This is repeated in the Mills Catalogue of 1912, still at 1.00 dollar per dozen.

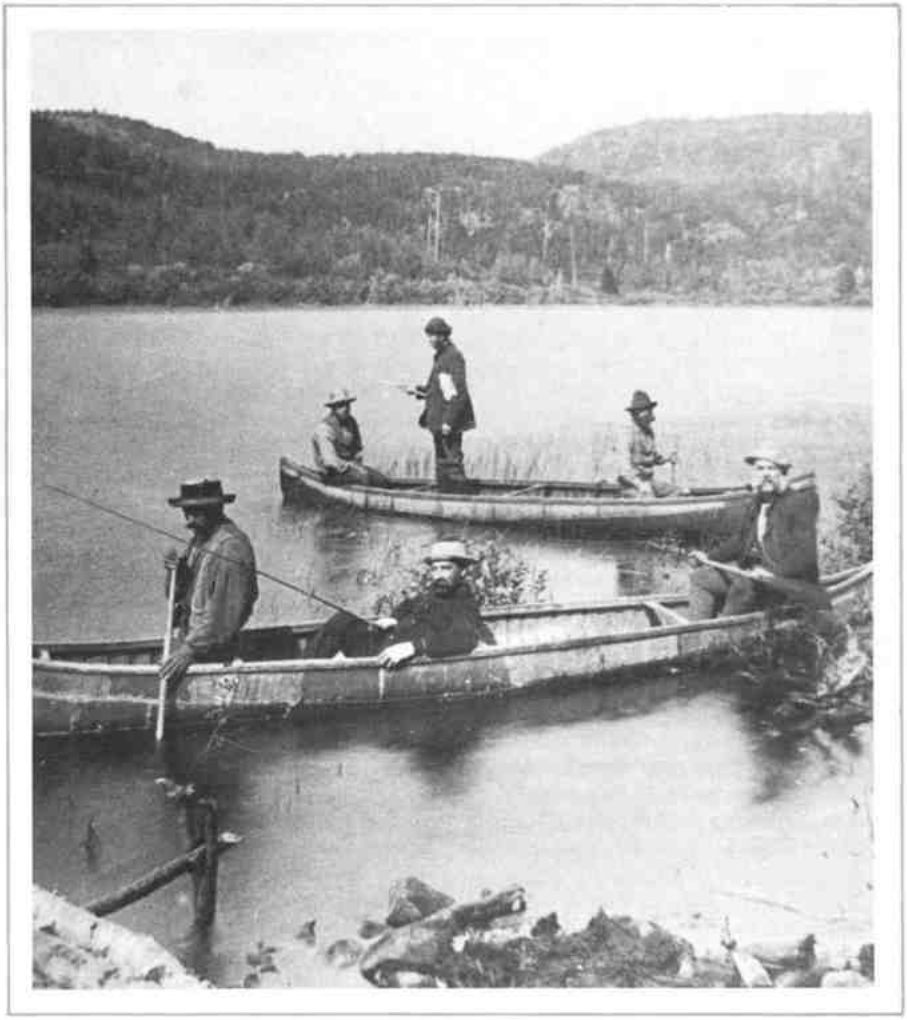
What we have so far, about the American Cahill then, is conjecture and deduction. It is exasperating and frustrating that we cannot pin down the date and originator of one of the soundest and most used, in both its versions, native American trout flies.

Writings on American fly fishing for trout abound with mention of the Cahill. Countless writers call it a standard fly, meaning not only that it has been around a long time but that it fills an important niche in the list of artificials. Several writers call it, in the original, wet version, the most important of the dull wet flies. The implication of this statement is that it is a brown trout fly which came along with the browns, stocked first in America in 1883, when brook trout and fancy flies were at the end of their dominance.

Cecil Heacox carries the implication a bit further by calling it the most used brown trout fly in the country, again in all its versions, but mostly in the dry Light Cahill. He is probably correct in this, I know more than a thousand fly fisherman and have fished with several hundred and every good fly fisher I know, including Ernie Schwiebert, Doug Swisher, Carl Richards, Polly Rosborough, Lefty Kreh, Dan Bailey, Bud Lilly, Bob Jacklin - all of them list the dry Light Cahill among their top three choices for wary brown trout. As tied by Chandler, it has survived unchanged for about 70 years. The pattern, with speckled wood duck tail and wings, body of lightest fur from a red fox belly and light ginger hackle, is the standard light yellowish dry fly all over America.

The regular Cahill as a wet fly probably simulates as many underwater insects as any fly ever designed. In the smaller sizes - 16 and 18 - it is as good a caddis pupa representation as you'll need and on up the scale of sizes it will pass for both mayfly and stonefly nymphs. It is simply one of the buggiest looking wet flies around. Its use as a dry fly is minimal today.

Somewhere out there, in all of the writing in the periodicals about fly fishing for trout around 1910-1920, someone at sometime must have given the information which has eluded me. That is - was Dan Cahill truly the originator of the fly that bears his name, and when did he first tie and use it? I'm at the end of my rather meager resources here in Montana. Can some of you eastern researchers give us a hand as did Rich Bauer with *The Origins of Grizzly Hackle*? Let's hear from you.



Advice to Young Anglers

by Henry Carleton

My advice to young anglers may be given freely and with joy. I have found that old anglers do not usually take my advice except with some such vicious remark as "Wha-at! Have you just got onto that?" or "My dear boy, I got over that tom-fool notion twenty years ago;" or else they listen to what I have to say, look at me with almost human intelligence, then burst out in loud, hoarse laughter, and leave the room.

"Angling" signifies the art of decoying a living fish in his element by means of a natural or artificial bait. Decoying bullfrogs with red flannel, or catching leeches by persuading a small, innocent boy to swim through the infested pond, are both rare old sports, but are not mentioned by any of the authorities.

There are two requisites for the art of angling, one being to buy your tackle and the other to find the fish. The combination of tackle and fish is what makes up three-fourths of the fun.

Tackle is of various kinds, solid and fluid. Fluid tackle costs $4 a gallon, but no dealer will warrant it to last.

The young angler must first provide himself with a rod or a fish-pole. A fish-pole costs from $3.42 down, and a rod from $4 up.

THE ROD

Rods are not sold by weight. I have seen a fine white pine rod, 12 feet long, two inches thick and as full of life as a billiard cue, sell for $3.65, while a rod only 10½ feet long, and not weighing over four ounces, costs $30.

A good rod will last an angler many years. I knew a man once who had a fish-pole for which he only paid $1.25, but which lasted his lifetime. He went fishing the day he got it and became drowned. I have a $2 pole which was presented to me in 1874 and is still in good condition. This is partly due to my excellent care of the pole, and partly because I have never used it.

The best rod is the split bamboo. A young angler may purchase an ordinary bamboo and get an industrious pickerel or cat-fish to split it for him, but the result is not generally satisfactory. If you are the sole owner or lessee of a first-class split bamboo rod, do not abuse it. It was not intended by nature to welt a mule with, nor to push a flat-bottomed boat off the mud, and when stepped on or sat down upon, it has a way of looking up at you with $30 worth of mute reproach in its German-silver eyes which is very saddening to the true sportsman.

A fine rod is not designed to be used as a derrick. Many a young angler has lost his salvation by attempting to hoist a four-pound mud-turtle from the water with a seven-ounce expensive rod.

It may as well be stated right here that the all-round rod, warranted to take anything from a six-foot tarpon to a four-inch bullhead, is a dismal failure. The best tarpon rods are one size too large for bullheads, and the best bullhead rods are seven sizes too small for tarpon; but when a cast-iron rake is fastened to the "general" all-round rod, it is useful in skittering for clams.

The young angler who buys one first-class rod and handles it as tenderly as though it were a boil, is $64 richer than the man who fritters away his substance buying cheap but glittering poles. A man may split kindling-wood in a far less expensive manner than by fishing with the kind of rod that has nickel-plated ferrules and comes in a long, narrow paper bag.

THE REEL

When the young angler has saved up money for several years and owns a good rod, he then should struggle to become possessor of a good reel.

A good reel is more valuable to a true sportsman, as a friend, than a small, rough-haired yellow dog.

Reels are of several kinds. There is the click reel, the multiplying reel, the Kentucky reel and the Virginia reel. Some reels are simple and some are complicated. The most complicated reel I ever saw was owned by a man who was coming home at 2 A.M., after a prolonged struggle with a demijohn of Monongahela at a wake.

There are nickel-plated man-traps sold under the name of reels which have caught more good citizens and ruined them for life, than have been caught by the gallows. There is nothing sadder in this vale of tears than to see a strong, once happy man sitting down in his boat at 4 P.M., when the bass are biting at their best, trying to wind a reel upon which he thought he had saved $4, but which has broken four brass teeth and a crank in the effort to say "Biz-z-z-z!"

A click reel is only used upon a fly-rod. It makes a noise like winding up a kitchen clock, and from this simple but vicious habit it derives its name.

A multiplying reel is one which winds up the line several times faster than the crank turns. The multiplying reel is to be used in casting a minnow or a deeply

pained bullfrog out upon the waters, and a reel which multiplies twice is preferred by the angler and is just the same to the frog.

LINES, LEADER AND HOOK

Lines are of several kinds. They are of various lengths also, but most of them are about as long as a piece of string. A braided line is the best to use upon a reel. A twisted line kinks, and one day's experience with a kinky line will use up more of a man's chances for a happy hereafter than he can replace during an entire camp meeting season at Asbury Park.

Silk lines are best to use in fresh water, but in salt water give me a linen line or give me death.

For fly-fishing use the heavy enameled water-proof line; but for minnow or frog casting or dredging with worms, buy the fine hard-braided silk. It runs better from the reel.

Leaders are long, thin pieces of gut, which look like fiddle strings, but have too many knots in them for that purpose. It is generally whispered about that they are the product of the domestic cat; but this is a mistake, and those who are thus seeking an excuse for raising cats may as well be informed that I have exposed their hollow scheme.

Always test your leaders before using them. You may save money by purchasing cheap leaders, but you will lose fish. Show me a man who has just bought fourth-class leaders, and I will show you a man who will eventually use both Profanity and Rum.

Fish-hooks are of various shape, size and disposition. They were not intended to be carried loose in the coat-tail pocket. A courteous sportsman, when he discovers that he has inadvertently sat down upon a package of fish-hooks belonging to his friend, will immediately rise and try his best to return the hooks.

THE ARTIFICIAL FLY

The artificial fly is a fish-hook to which variously colored feathers have been tied, and is supposed to be easily mistaken by a fish for a real fly. If this be true, it is a strong proof that a fish hasn't sense enough to come in when it rains, and doesn't deserve to live.

Real flies may be obtained at most watering places much cheaper than the artificial flies, but for some purposes they are not so useful.

Artificial flies are all named. There are the "Professor," the "Hackle," the "Ibis," the "Yellow Sally" and several other breeds. Whenever a bilious angler has no luck, and nothing to do, he sits down and concocts a new swindle in feathers, christens it with a nine-jointed Indian name, and at once every angler in the country rushes in and pays $2 a dozen for samples.

To cast the artificial fly well requires practice, and some persons are more skillful than others. The first thing I ever caught on an artificial fly was a large and muscular friend who was sitting in the stern of the boat, and who was narrow-minded enough to make coarse remarks while we were rowing back to camp for surgical assistance.

Oysters do not rise readily to the artificial fly, particularly during the spawning season.

Tackle boxes are now thrown upon the market in great numbers, and are of several sizes. The smallest is made to contain chewing tobacco and fish-hooks well mixed up together; but the larger kinds have more compartments than a tenement-house, and will hold lines, hooks, reels, sinkers, gangs, poker chips and other necessaries with ease.

I submitted to Mr. T. B. Mills a design for a Sportsman's Complete Portable Tackle Box holding seven rods, four blankets, a demijohn, canned oysters, bacon and a folding boat, with extra

compartments for a camp kettle and a bowling alley to be used in case of rain, but as yet I have not heard that he has taken any steps toward getting a patent.

Some persons complain that their reels will not fit into any tackle box made; that is because they buy the reel first. The proper way is to get your tackle box and then only purchase such articles as will go in snugly.

HINTS ON GAME FISHES

Some fishes are very gamey while they are alive, and these are more highly prized by the true sportsman than fishes which only become gamey after softening up for several hours in the hot sun, like a menhaden. The mud turtle is not a game fish.

Most game fishes will rise to the fly, but the fishes which are sly enough not to do this pay lower rates on life insurance.

The trout is a various fish. In the South he is a lazy black bass with No. 14 mouth and the flavor of sour mud. In the Catskills he is mostly a work of imagination, and lives only in the clear, cold, running prospectus of a hotel charging $4 a day. In Parmachene Lake and other fastnesses of Maine he is a medium sized whale with red speckles onto his sides, and it costs a sportsman $9 a pound to go and drag him out of his native lair. In other portions of the effete North he is generally a five-inch spotted minnow capable of stretching an extra inch in the frying pan, and is as full of spirit, beauty and natural cussedness as a young and red-headed girl.

The untutored trout prefers a gob of

worms to a fly, and this distressing fact has got more of the authorities on game fish in trouble than has the malaria.

HOW TO ANGLE

There are various methods of angling, and each is useful in its way.

Casting the fly is the most scientific method. Let the young angler imagine the rod and line to be a whip, and then let him try to lamn an imaginary mule 40 feet away, and he will slowly acquire the correct motion. If there is a tree behind him, he will also get some subsequent exercise which will be healthful and invigorating, though he may lose his patience and some tackle.

Casting the minnow or frog is great sport, when the bass are biting well, which occurs in the dark of the moon, about once in four years. Hook the frog in the slack of his trousers, sling him out as far as you can, and await results. Fresh excitement can always be had by putting on another frog—that is, fresh excitement for the new frog. Hook a minnow through the lip. He will live longer than when hooked through the kidneys, and he will have just as much fun.

Trolling is splendid exercise for the man who rows the boat; but the corpulent man who sits astern and swears at his luck does not get the benefit of this. Most trollers use a gang, which is an arrangement of ten hooks; but this must impair a fish's digestion, and should be forbidden by law.

Still fishing is best suited to paralytics, convalescents from brain fever, and persons who are dead. The sport consists in putting a hunk of bait on a hook, flavoring it with saliva, and then lowering it to await the coming of some goggle-eyed marine tramp in search of a free lunch.

The black bass is another game fish. He is of two species: the big mouth and the small mouth. To tell a big mouth from a small mouth has bothered the authorities for many years. Dr. Henshall says one is a grystes Salmoides, whatever that is, and that the other is a something or other Dolmieu; but I think that the Doctor is prejudiced. There is a simpler way of distinguishing the two. Catch a six-inch bass, and if you can insert your fist in his countenance he is a small mouth, but if you can crawl down him yourself he is the other kind.

The black bass is very capricious in his diet. Sometimes he will take the fly, sometimes the minnow, and sometimes he prefers a large and fierce bug with thirty-four legs, and a name which I will not mention in an article which may be read by ladies. A black bass is as uncertain as a lottery ticket, but differs from this in that he is worth the money. He weighs from seven pounds down. Most bass weighing seven pounds are still swimming in their native waters, having been lost by fishermen who tell the truth.

A bass weighing under three-quarters of a pound is called a throw-back, and should be returned to the water. Bass weighing from three-quarters to one and a half pounds are cookies, and may be fried and devoured with a little butter and a great deal of pleasure. Bass weighing two pounds are corkers; three pounds are thumpers; four pounds are busters; five pounds are snorters, and any bass weighing more than that is an old He.

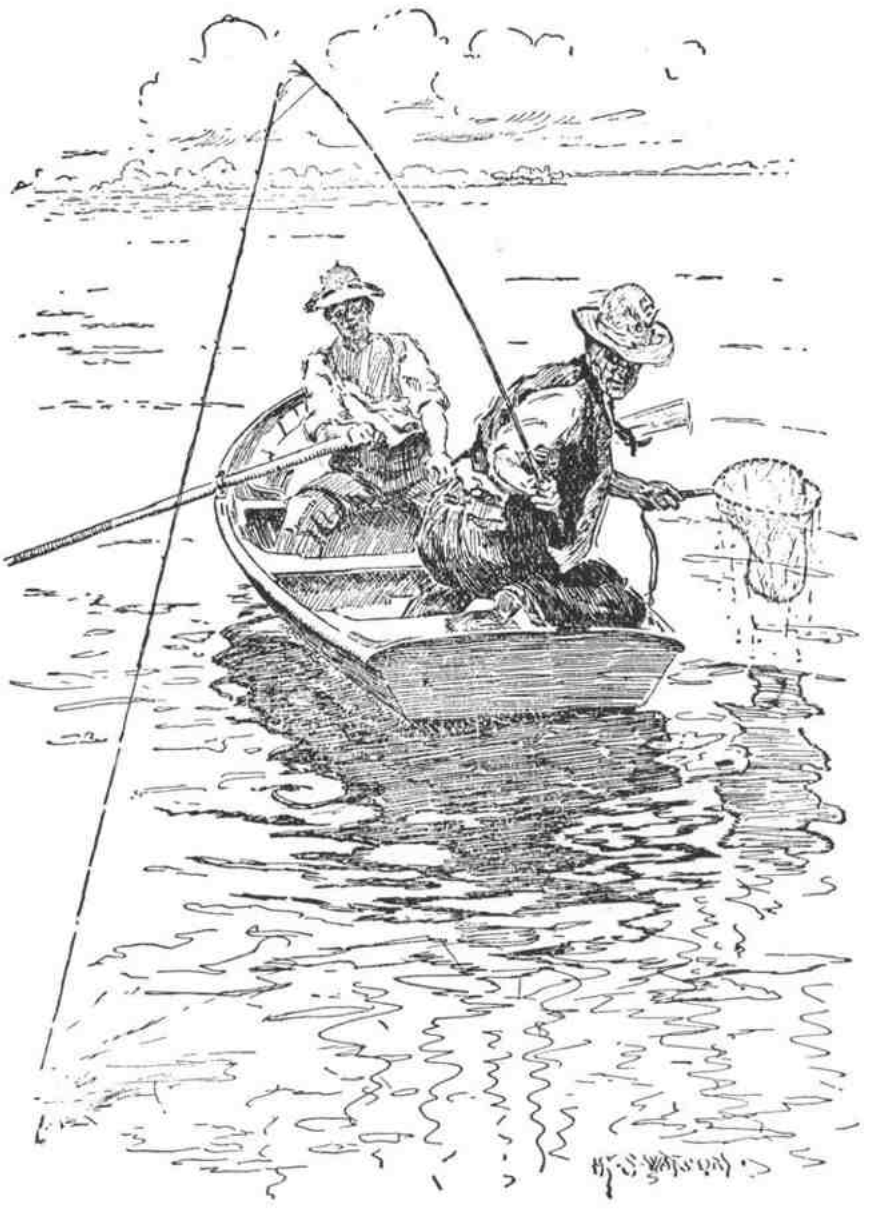
The salmon is a game fish which may easily be captured in the Fulton Market and in Canada, but he is the exclusive property of the Restigouche Club, which has a patent onto him.

A good salmon outfit will cost $135.64, and the railroad fares, board, guide and pool cost about $737 more. Then, if you are in luck, you may catch a 16-pound salmon and ship it in ice to city persons who never eat fish, but who will say "Thank you" in a manner worth fully 40 cents on your return, and then privately tell your friends that they believe you caught that salmon with a $5 bill.

The striped bass is a game fish which was principally designed to amuse the Cuttyhunk Club and smash up high-priced tackle.

The pickerel is not a game fish. He is an insect.

There is a fierce fish called the tomcod which infests the lower Hudson. When dredging from a North river wharf for tommies, sometimes you catch a tommy and sometimes you catch an old, water-logged boot, and you cannot tell which until you get it to the surface, ex-



cept that usually the boot offers most resistance. A tomcod sometimes attains the length of six inches and weighs at least three ounces. He is very game. When you hook him, he helps you pull up the sinker, and then fans himself until you take him in out of the wet. Sometimes a tommy will be game enough to live until you can get him into the boat, but he is usually dead and half sour by that time.

CONCERNING THE BLACK FLY

The black fly is not as large as the bull dog, but he can bite with both ends. There is not a single black fly in the Adirondacks. All the black flies there are born married and have large families.

The black fly earns his living by raising lumps like the egg of a speckled hen on the forehead and behind the ears of a man, who will simultaneously wish that he could die and be out of his misery. One hundred and seventy black flies can feed comfortably on each square inch of a man's ears; but the simple-hearted natives of Maine, the Adirondacks and Canada do not mind them until they settle down nine deep.

The lumps raised by a black fly will grow seven days and then burst into a rich, dark-red bloom, which is much admired by the angler when he sees himself in a looking-glass trying to shave.

There are mosquitoes and deer flies also in these localities, but they are mere toys to the man who is wrestling with several million free and easy black flies.

Sometimes the black flies will swoop upon a camp of anglers in Maine, and in four minutes there will be nothing left but a few whitened bones and the red pepper.

Most tackle men sell various kinds of highly perfumed paste, which they recommend for black flies and then charge fifty cents a box. These pastes all have musical names and a brown smell, and the black flies are very fond of them. The natives of Maine use tar-oil. A liberal bath of tar-oil makes a man smell a good deal like sludge acid and sometimes like a turkey-buzzard, but it does seem to lessen the appetite of very young black flies, or those which are chronic cripples or invalids. But rather than go around smelling like a dead Turk who has been kept too long, I will die in battle with black flies and save my reputation.

CAMPING OUT

Camping out is a noble and improving sport, but should be indulged in with caution.

Should the young angler find himself to be hopelessly lost in the woods, he should proceed to camp out and yell in a shrill tenor voice every four minutes during the night, until he is rescued by a large leather-headed guide who earns $4 a day.

The first duty of the camper out is to build a fire, which is a pleasant process during or just after a rain. Having built the fire, he should spread his blankets to the windward. The windward of a camp fire changes every sixty-four seconds, which will fill the young angler with smoke and emotion and keep his mind occupied by moving his blankets in a circle. After three hours of this solemn amusement, he may let the fire go out, and, listening to the grand old voices of the pines and mosquitoes, drop to sleep, if he can, and be happy.

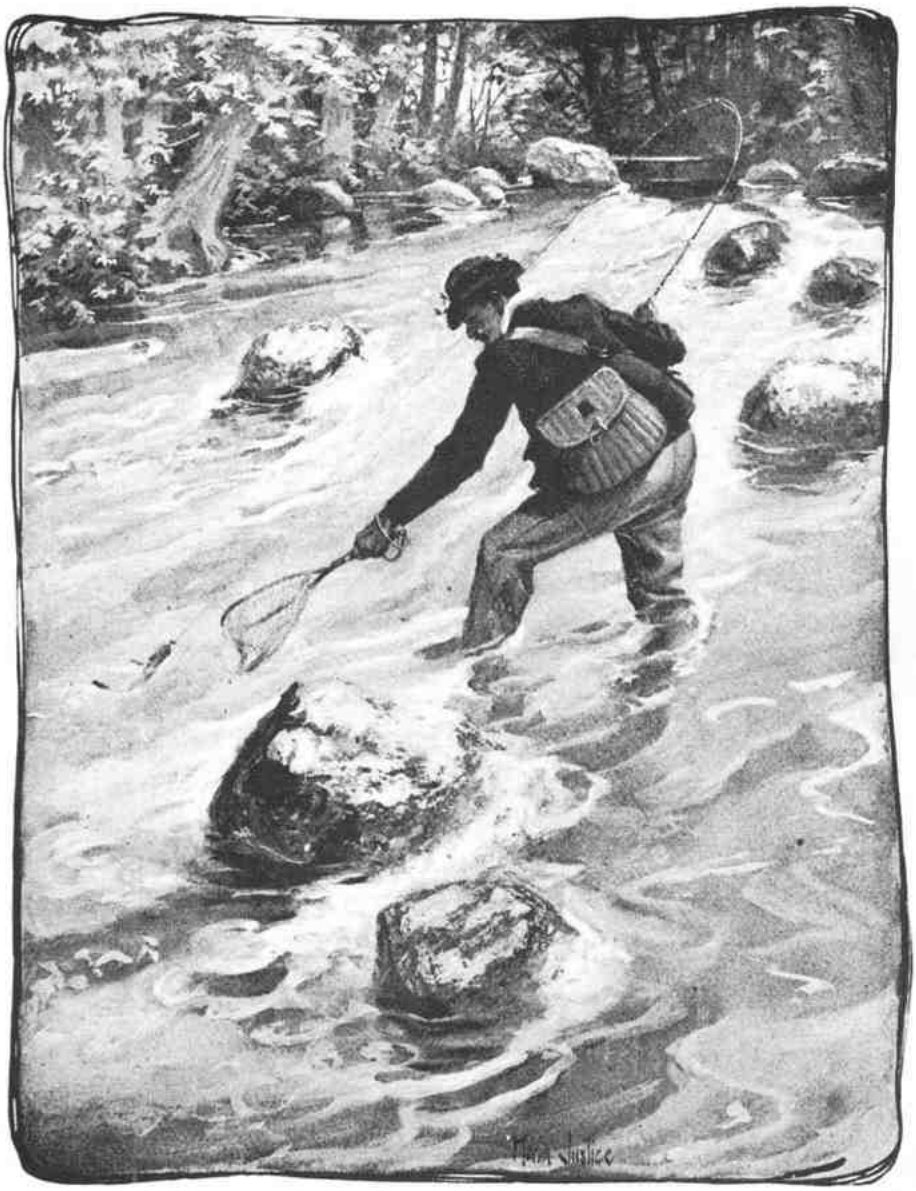
Should he discover during the night that he had accidentally spread his blankets upon a nest of large and polygamous ants, he should at once arise and move camp. No angler should be cruel to dumb animals.

The art of cooking in camp is of great value. Soup, coffee and boiled cabbage may all be prepared in the same utensil, but for sponge cake and calves-foot jelly a separate pan must be used.

I have a friend who went camping in the North Woods for two weeks, and he enjoyed every minute of his stay; but rather than go again he will go to State prison for nine years.

If the few little precepts I have given can be of any use to the young anglers who will read them, I shall be glad. They have been of no use to me.

We found this article in a William Mills catalog from the 1930's, but have reason to believe it was first published elsewhere. Do our readers know more about Mr. Carleton? We would like to find more of his work.



Notes and Comment

MORE ON THE DANIEL WEBSTER ROD

In our last issue we featured the recently-acquired Daniel Webster rod, but our description overlooked some good information about that rod. We are now reasonably certain the rod was given to Webster in 1847. In June of that year, Webster wrote to his son as follows:

"I found in the gun-room an unopened box. Nobody knew whence it came, nor exactly when. It was found to contain the most splendid angling apparatus you can imagine. There are three complete rods, all silver mounted, with my name engraved; beautiful reels, and books of flies and hooks, and quantities of other equipments. The maker's card was in the box containing the books, &c. He is Mr. Welch, of New York."

Shortly thereafter, Webster wrote to Welch:

"Dear Sir, –

On my arrival here, on the 8th instant, I found an unopened box, whose contents no one knew; nor could I ascertain whence it came, nor, with any accuracy, the date of its reception.

You know what the box contained, and can therefore well judge of my surprise, as I found no explanation, and no clue, except your card, and a short memorandum in writing. Such a rich and elegant apparatus for angling, I am sure, I never saw, either at home or abroad. The rods and reels are certainly of exquisite workmanship, and richly mounted; the flies truly beautiful, and the contents of the books ample, abundant, and well selected. Poor Isaak Walton! Little did he think, when moving along by the banks of the rivers and brooks of Staffordshire, with his cumbrous equipments, that any unworthy disciple of his would ever be so gorgeously fitted out, with all that art and taste can accomplish for the pursuit of his favorite sport!"

These passages appeared in the published correspondence of Webster, and were reproduced in Charles Goodspeed's *Angling in America*. They are impressive evidence that American tackle makers were already serious and competitive artisans quite some time before the Civil War.

A COLLECTOR'S DIRECTORY PART II

In Volume 6, Number 2, we featured a directory of early American tackle manufacturers and dealers, compiled and annotated by Ken Cameron. Since then a number of other early dealers have come to our attention, and some of our members have sent in additional names. It may be we can publish a second such list, and we here invite our readers to submit other entries. The criteria established by Ken still hold: the firms must have been defunct since 1915, and they must be American. Let us hear from you.

OUR AUTHORS

Ken Cameron ("The Victorian Angler") is a frequent contributor to this magazine. Ken is the author of numerous books, including several successful spy-thrillers, historical novels, and a college theater text book. He is currently writer-in-residence at the University of South Carolina, Columbia, South Carolina.

Tom Rosenbauer is unusually well qualified to write about John Atherton, since he has devoted several seasons to studying and fishing the Battenkill. Tom is a professional fly tier and fly fishing instructor, but is probably better known as Editor of the *Orvis News*.

Charles Brooks is a former Trustee of the Museum who has taken on some unusual writing assignments for us in the past, including the construction and use of a horse-hair fly line. He is the author of four well-known books on western fish and rivers. His most recent, *The Living River*, is a thoroughly readable "biography" of his home river, the Madison of Wyoming/Montana.

Joseph Spear Beck is a Trustee of the Museum who lives in Chicago, from

where he regularly sends us rare items for our collection. Among his previous articles for us was a Derrydale book collector's guide; he is an ardent collector of angling books.

ANOTHER FIRST BONEFISH?

In Volume 5, Number 3 we reprinted material by Joe Brooks in which he stated that the first intentionally fly-caught bonefish were taken in 1947. We have recently located an earlier candidate, though our information on it is limited. The inscription on the photograph reads "1st bonefish on a fly, using Orvis tackle in 1939, Capt. Bill Smith." The article by Joe Brooks also states that bonefish were caught earlier, as early as 1926, accidentally while fishing for baby tarpon. We would like to learn more about early fly fishing for bonefish and perhaps some of our readers can help.

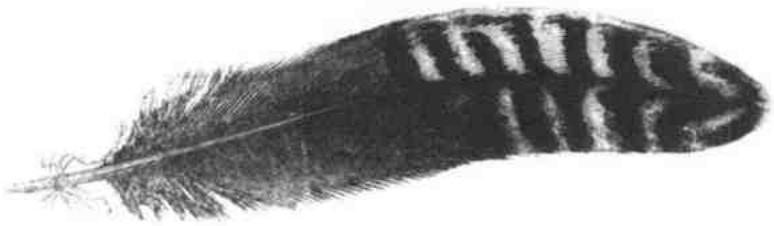
COLONIAL ANGLING

I offer here a brief report on research I am doing into the history of sportfishing in the American Colonies. Past writers have stated that fishing was not a common pastime in Colonial America, giving such reasons as a generally puritanical outlook (which frowned upon such frivolous activities) and a frontier existence that left little time for recreation. It is clear from my studies to this point that sportfishing was much more commonly practiced before the Revolutionary War than has previously been reported. A few examples and comments follow.

Historians have reevaluated traditional interpretations of Puritan life, so we now know that the social scene in the Massachusetts Bay area was not as dreary as most textbooks would have us believe. Even if religious attitudes *had* been completely negative about fishing, however, the practice of such recreational activities could not long have been suppressed in the bay area. What began as a religious colony early in the 1600's quickly became a commercial center. By 1690, for example, the churches of Boston could not have seated more than 25% of the town's population, and the tavern had replaced the church as the focal point of town culture.

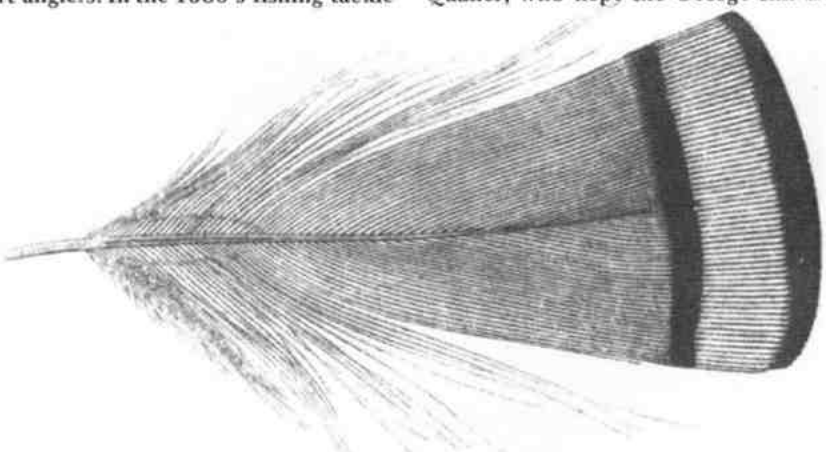
Previous writers have cited the paucity of angling writing produced in the colonies as additional proof the sport was rarely practiced. This is not a reliable measure of sportfishing activity. In the 16th, 17th, and 18th Centuries, England itself produced only a few fishing books per 100 years, and most of these were not widely circulated. Fishing books and other fishing writings were not very fashionable in this period. Book producing

was reserved for other subjects. For example, in the years 1682-1684, almost all of the 130 books and pamphlets printed in Boston were religious in nature. Though the religious elements of the community no longer had tight reign on citizen behavior, they still formed a large part of the intellectual community, and still held control of most printing establishments.



But the Boston situation is only a part of the colonial American scene, and was probably not typical of the average settlement. Sport angling was common in other colonies. Several sources report that the Dutch were in the habit of holding regular, social, fishing outings at Collect Pond, New Amsterdam, by 1650, a century and a quarter before the revolution. I have already located a number of illustrations from the 17th Century that depict such activities in the New Amsterdam area.

Philadelphians, of course, were responsible for our first angling club of record, the Schuylkill Fishing Company, founded in 1732. The open and progressive attitudes of the Pennsylvania colonists apparently caused few problems for sport anglers. In the 1680's fishing tackle



appeared in Estate Lists in the Philadelphia area. Evidence that fishing was not frowned upon (if the establishment of the Schuylkill club is not enough) also comes from a letter written by no less a personage than William Penn's daughter, to her brother, then in England. In the year 1737 she commented as follows:

> "My chief amusement this summer has been fishing. I therefore request the favour of you when Laisure Hour will admit, you will buy for me a four joynted strong fishing Rod and Real with strong good Lines and asortment of hooks the best sort . . ."

Apparently fishing tackle of a quality to suit her tastes was not then available in Philadelphia. Charles Goodspeed, in *Angling In America*, cites several other instances of sportfishing activity by members of this community.

An interesting footnote to the Philadelphian scene results from my coming upon a commercial fly tier in that city, active in the years 1773 to 1778. In 1830, John Watson's *Annals of Philadelphia in the Olden Times* was published. Six years later, one Jacob Mordecai, also of Philadelphia, wrote extensive addenda for Watson's book, but these were not published. They were recently identified in the American Philosophical Society Library, and published in the *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography* in 1974. They tell of Davis Hugh Davis, a Quaker, who kept the George Inn from 1773 to 1778, and list among his many skills and occupations that of tackle manufacturer:

> "He was famous for making fishing tackle deep-seas, fly feathers etc. His operations for fastening the hooks & other light work was carried on during school hours, 8 till 12 & 2 to 5, after taking his rounds . . ."

I believe this to be the earliest reference to an American professional fly-tier yet discovered, but I by no means imagine Davis to have been first. Though we have no known references to fly fishing in this country before the 1760's I suspect it was practiced quite a bit earlier, and I further suspect additional information remains to be found. My search has not scratched the surface of an overwhelmingly large historical resource, one that a lifetime of study could not exhaust.

Philadelphia and New Amsterdam were not unusual in their hearty interest in sportfishing. There are statements in a journal published in the American Turf Register in 1832 that leave no doubt that fishing was one of many common recreations in Virginia as early as 1729.

As misleading as the notion that religious leaders were able to suppress sportfishing is the notion that colonists were too busy fighting off bears and Indians to enjoy themselves. Indian uprisings did occur, and occasional wars caused general withdrawal of settlers in some areas, but life in the colonies had achieved a "civilized" routine only a few decades after settlement. Some colonies were never troubled by Indian wars, others experienced them only rarely. Very quickly, the major communities spread beyond any hope of fortification. By 1720, the inhabitants of the five major colonial towns (Boston, Philadelphia, New York, Newport, and Charles Town) constituted only 8% of the population of the colonies. The rest lived in smaller settlements, or were spread out across the countryside. America in the late 17th Century was not so embattled that the majority of its inhabitants could not afford an occasional holiday.

It would be foolish to predict how much more evidence of this early sportfishing activity remains to be unearthed. It is plain from my preliminary search, though, that a reassessment of our traditional view of colonial angling is in order. I hope to prepare a detailed report on this subject after I have examined it more carefully. Anyone wanting additional information on the source materials used in the above summary is welcome to contact me. In such a brief report, footnotes did not seem appropriate.

Paul Schullery
The American Fly Fisher

CORRECTIONS

We have had a few errors brought to our attention recently, involving matters of some importance. Rather than note them in each issue, and subject our editorial selves to quarterly embarrassment, we have gathered them here.

Mary Kelly, who wrote the excellent

article on early Leonard tackle for us, found a mistake in our Volume 5, Number 3 article on the Leonard-Hawes Collection. On page 17 are pictured two early Leonard reels, but the one on the left does not have its original handle. The handle should look like the one pictured on page 25 of Volume 6, Number 1.

Errors have been found in each of the last two issues. We suspect this is our punishment for being so inordinately proud of these. In Volume 6, Number 3, on the inside front cover, the first sentence ends in the unusual word "museu". This is not our attempt to abbreviate a word we use roughly 10,000 times a day, but maybe it will catch on. In the same issue, on page 2, a more substantive error was pointed out to us by Professor Harrison. In his article, the second paragraph, we have misspelled the name of the printer, Wynken de Worde.

In Volume 6, Number 4, we printed a photograph, on page 26, of Herbert Hoover in Idaho. We received a letter from Ken Wright, of Chicago, explaining

the circumstances of the picture, and we print his comments below.

"The photograph was taken by my grandfather (Mr. W. S. Trude), in front of our ranch in Island Park, Idaho. Your fine publication carried an article on the ranch and the origin of the Trude Fly in 1978.

The year was approximately 1940 and although I cannot remember the names of President Hoover's companions in the photo, they included the President of Stanford University, the President of Anaconda Copper, plus other governmental and corporate dignitaries.

I was nine at the time, but I'll always remember President Hoover's entourage spreading themselves around our lake and shouting, 'Over here, Chief,' every time they had a strike. Let me assure you, more than one trout was caught.

President Hoover visited the ranch several times, always with a Mr. J. B. Howell of San Francisco, who was a good friend of my grandfather. We have many photographs and some film of his visitations."

Something Old, Something New

We maintain a very low editorial profile in *The American Fly Fisher*. The cause of the Museum is simple and uncontroversial, and we assume our readers agree with the magazine's oft-stated purpose, that being, "For the Pleasure of the Membership." And so we limit editorial intrusions primarily to introductory material and commentary, which we hope serve to heighten the reader's enjoyment. We wish, however, to break that habit, just once, here. With this issue the present editors complete their second Volume, and some words of appreciation and acknowledgment are in order.

This magazine was truly the child of Austin Hogan. His expertise and stature in the fly fishing community made it a unique and vital publication. The design work of Ann Secor and her staff did justice to the Hogan expertise. We thank them for the superb tradition we inherited from them.

Since we began editing the magazine we've had the benefit of advice and assistance from many quarters. Rather than establish an official "advisory board," we have informally sought suggestions and guidance from many people. We must mention a few who have been helpful at various times (in many cases repeatedly): Ken Cameron, Randall Rives, Nick Lyons, Steve Raymond, Craig Woods, Jim Sulham, and John Merwin (who refers to our magazine as "the finest angling clip-art service available").

Technical production of the magazine has benefited continually from the guidance of Ann Secor and the eagle-eye proofreading of Laura Towslee. Most magazine readers who bother to read all the small print about editorial staff and assistants may wonder why various office assistants and proofreaders are mentioned at all. It's usually because the editors realize how much they owe to these people (without whom the best thought-out article is a mess) and feel guilty not admitting that editors need all the help they can get. The magazine has been printed, since its beginning, by Thompson's, Inc., here in Manchester, and the people at that fine establishment have made frequent useful suggestions. correcting *other* editorial mistakes.

For those of you who *don't* read the small print, it may be a surprise to know that we are too small a magazine to pay our writers. All articles that appear here are donated. Preparing a historical feature for us can be quite time-consuming, so we are both pleased and grateful about the many writers (both famous and unknown) who have contributed to these pages in the last two years. And, similarly, for the numerous pieces of artwork that have also been sent us for use here. The magazine, like the Museum itself, is steadily improving as an expression of fly fishing's interest in its history.

Most of all at this point we would like to single out the outstanding contributions of one individual, without whose guidance the magazine would not be what it is today. Late in 1978 Mike Haller offered to lend a hand with photographs, and has since donated enormous amounts of talent and time to our magazine. The spectacular color photographs that we've featured for some time are his work, but they are only the most visible of his many gifts. His frequent suggestions in design and style have led us, stumbling but ambitious, to the first major change in the magazine's overall appearance. A great part of the new format is his creation, and we are very excited about it. Mike recently left the area, but we have arranged to continue our working relationship. It is one of the most fruitful we have ever had.

When anything changes in appearance, some people become suspicious. This is quite often the case in a magazine, since a new design can cause readers to lose their bearings. We don't anticipate any such problems here, since the content, character, and direction of *The American Fly Fisher* have come through the transition unscathed. We're still the same esoteric, light-hearted, and charming little journal you've all come to know and love, and if the face is new the name is old, and so is the purpose—the pleasure of the membership.

Museum News

MUSEUM FUND RAISING AUCTION NEW YORK, MARCH 18

This coming March the Museum will hold its second New York auction. Last year's auction brought in more than $8,000, and we have high hopes to improve on that figure this year. Very soon all members will receive invitations and other information about the New York auction, including raffle tickets.

We anticipate a stellar assortment of prizes, both for the auction and the raffle. Already we have received some fine gifts, including several graphite rods (so far from Cortland, Eagle Claw, and Garcia), bamboo rods (both Leonard and Orvis), numerous out-of-print and limited edition books (including the beautiful little Honey Dun Press reprint of George Scotcher's *THE FLY FISHER'S LEGACY* and some fine Hewitt and LaBranche early editions), and some exciting fishing trips (including trips with Lefty Kreh and Charles Brooks).

One of the most outstanding offerings will surely be some copies of the new Ogden Pleissner print shown on page 20 of this issue. All members will have the opportunity to participate in the bidding this year, through a sealed bid form to be sent with the invitations.

This year's auction will be held at The Yale Club, with social hour beginning at 5:15 and auction at 6:30. Hearty hors d'oeuvres and drinks will be included in the admission price.

Like practically all good causes, the Museum depends on the generosity of its friends. We are actively soliciting prizes from many corners of the fishing tackle industry (they responded freely last year), but also need the help of our members. Fly-tiers, artists, authors, and other craftspeople have something to share and can help by sending us the products of their talents. It is through such a personal gift that we have been able to offer some of our most sought-after items at recent auctions, such as the magnificent hand-crafted nets of Clint Byrnes, Museum member from Beaver Dam, Wisconsin. Few of us are master craftsmen like Clint, but many are competent fly-tiers.

If you have friends in the New York area who might not hear of this auction but might be interested, send us their address and we'll contact them.

NEXT ANNUAL MEETING MAY 17, 1980

This year's Annual Meeting of the Museum membership will be held the weekend of May 17, with business meeting and Banquet occurring on Saturday. Members and their friends are cordially invited to renew acquaintances, see new Museum exhibits, and enjoy a Spring weekend in Manchester. As usual, we will be sending all members all necessary information about agenda, speakers, and reservations later in the winter.

As usual, we will be holding an informal auction at the meeting, and we encourage members to send (or, better yet, bring) items for the auction.

RECENT ACQUISITIONS

We can only mention a few recent gifts here, and will list them all in an upcoming issue. Jack Brewton has sent us a beautiful set of William Schaldach etchings, ones that appeared in Schaldach's book *Fish*. Robert Buckmaster has just given us several cartons of books, some for our library and some for use in the upcoming auctions. Lindley Eberstadt's very unusual donation is featured beginning on page 8 of this issue. Scotty Chapman, long-time supervisory ranger in Yellowstone Park, sent us his personal fishing log from 1941 to 1965. It includes, among many other things, accounts of several trips with Ray Bergman. Honey Dun Press has sent us their two most recent productions, *A Catalogue of Books on Angling*, 1811, by Ellis, and *Dit Boecxken*, a Flemish angling treatise originally published in 1492. We will have more to say about Honey Dun Press and their work in resurrecting angling rarities in a future issue.

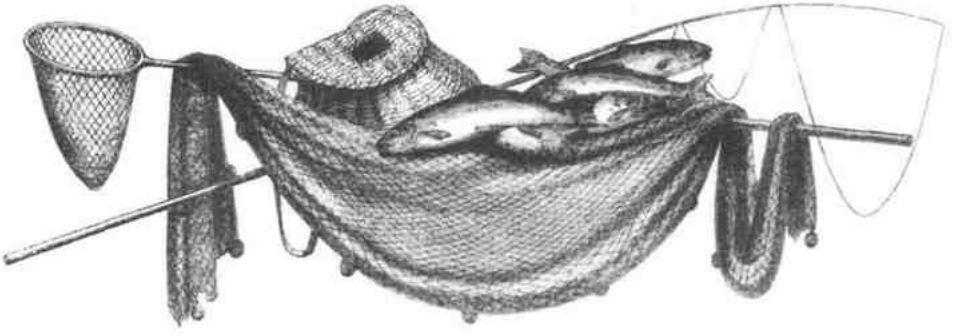
MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

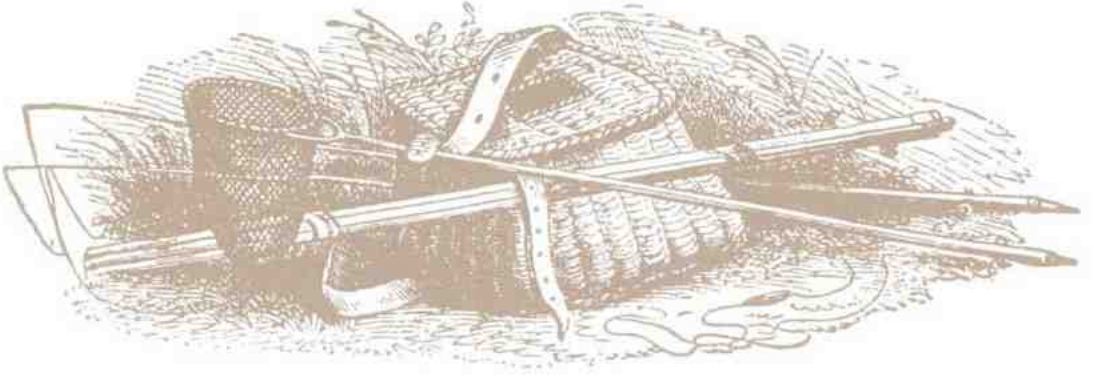
Members receive THE AMERICAN FLY FISHER, but the magazine is only the most visible of the membership benefits. Others include information and research services, appraisals for donors of materials, and involvement in museum activities. And, of course, the existence of the Museum, and its continuing work in preservation and education, is the greatest benefit of all

A tie tac is presented with each membership of $25.00 or more.

Associate	$ 15.00
Sustaining	$ 25.00
Patron	$ 100.00 and over
Sponsor	$ 250.00

All membership dues, contributions and donations are tax deductible.





And West is West

Our next issue is devoted exclusively to western subjects. Though we regularly include western angling in *The American Fly Fisher*, we figured it was about time to acknowledge, in a special way, our interest in western fishing history.

More than once we've heard western fishermen say "We don't have much history; we're still making it." In fact, the western United States has a very exciting history of sportfishing, and we'll highlight some of the best in Volume 7, Number 2.

George Grant, quite a historic figure himself, will profile Franz Pott, Montana's pioneer weaver of hair hackles and one of the west's first original fly tiers of note. Pete Hidy will offer a thoughtful paper on western angling history in general. Steve Raymond has edited an 1853 account of what was probably the first fly-caught sea-run cutthroat. Another first, the 1876 capture of a Columbia River salmon on the fly, will also be included.

The most unfortunate result of having the Museum in Vermont is that only a few westerners can visit it. We hope the day will come when we can have a western "branch" of the Museum, but in the meantime we intend to give western angling history its fair share of attention, both in the magazine and in the exhibits.