The American Fly Fisher

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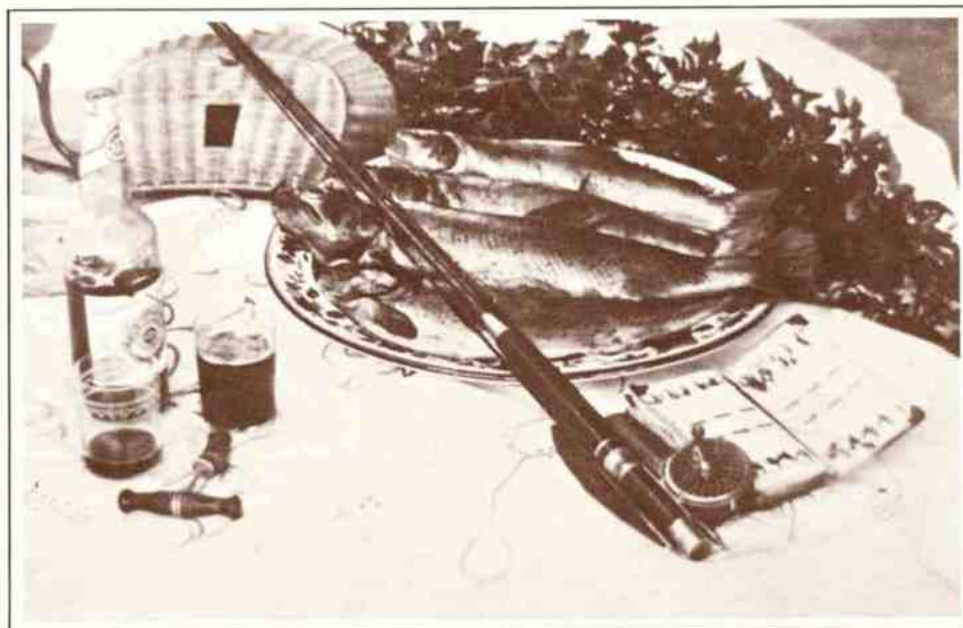

The West

We couldn't be more pleased with this issue unless it was bigger. If, by publishing this selection of western articles and stories, we encourage a few people to pursue the subject, we will have accomplished all we could hope for. There is a wealth of fascinating angling lore just waiting to be discovered: in old books and magazines, in historical societies, and in the columns of countless newspapers all over the west. What is presented in this issue of *The American Fly Fisher* is just a small sample of what must exist.

But it's a pretty good sample. If the two "firsts" reported here (Pacific salmon and cutthroat on flies) turn out to be invalid claims, it probably won't be by very many years. There is, at least, a feeling of pioneering in both accounts. If there are two more experienced western anglers from our own era than George Grant and the late Letcher Lambuth, we aren't aware of them. The story of steelheading on the North Umpqua by Major Mott captures the adventuresome mood of the "old days" on that majestic river, and it's also one of the best specimens of the "gee-whiz" school of fishing writing ("whoosh! sowie! gad!") we've seen in a long time. And no matter how tired you are of reading about Yellowstone Park fishing in every outdoor magazine you see, you'll be surprised at how it was there in the early days.

What we think we see in these stories, and in their telling by the likes of Pete Hidy, George Grant, and Steve Raymond, is not only an interest in history but a sense of being *part* of that history. Pete's rambling narrative of western angling history weaves a continuous fabric from those first flyfishers to the present; to himself and his friends, in fact. The sense of "tradition in progress" is clear in Pete's many anecdotes about the personalities and places that have shaped modern western angling.

Of course in recent times the circle has been completed so that it is difficult to tell eastern and western fly fishers apart. It only takes the modern angler a few hours to move from one coast to the other now; the discrete styles and techniques of fishing that were possible in railroad days are difficult to maintain. The modern angler, eastern or western, is homogenized (if not Grade A). Tackle dealers, magazines, and traveling fishermen see to it that everybody knows what everybody else is doing. Now any number of westerners look forward to their next vacation, when they will come east, to fish.

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On the cover: Trout fishing at Wagon Wheel Gap, Colorado, about 1890.

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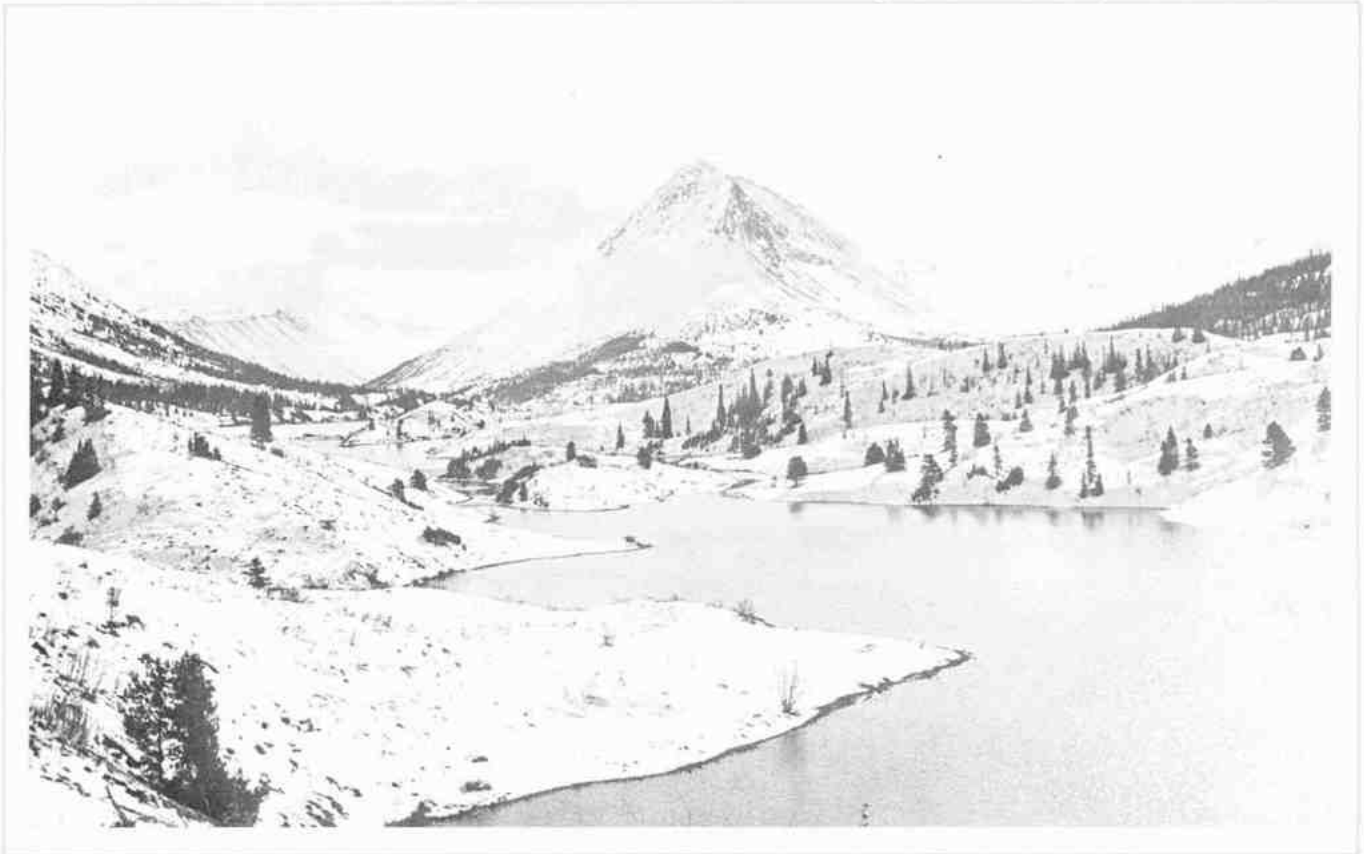
Part of the Skeena River system, British Columbia.



The Flyfisher's West

How it was during the first hundred years west of the Rocky Mountains

by Pete Hidy

Anglers with a sense of adventure always like to hear about the beginnings of fly fishing in the western states and Canada. Nostalgia and curiosity often raise questions about the earliest days of fishing for trout and steelhead in the watersheds explored by Lewis & Clark, and opened up by gold miners, mountain men, fur traders and pioneers.

Who were the earliest anglers? Where did they fish? What fly patterns did they use? Who were the fly tyers and rod makers? Who were the most interesting characters and the best writers? Have there been any regional characteristics?

Captain Cleveland Rockwell (1837–1907) was one of the first to catch trout on a fly west of the Rocky Mountains, according to the records I could find. He was a scientist and an artist who sailed to the mouth of the Columbia River with the U.S. Coast Survey operations in 1876 . . . the year the Sioux Indians annihilated General Custer and his men on Montana's Little Bighorn River. Rockwell fished the Trask River for sea-run cutthroat trout from the Pacific Ocean. The records show that he also caught a 25-pound salmon at the mouth of the Columbia, using a two-handed English salmon rod of ash with lancewood tip, 100 feet of braided line and a fly furnished by a valued friend.

In northern California the McCloud River Club was formed about 1878 and thus became the first fishing club in the West. It could be reached by stage coach over a rough and primitive road. The stage met the train about 16 miles south of Dunsmuir. The club still exists beside the stream there in northern California, and has recently donated its land to the Nature Conservancy.

In 1893 the San Francisco Fly Casting Club and the Golden Gate Angling & Casting Club started their distinguished careers and were destined to have among their members some of the finest casters in the world, including Jon Tarantino and Steve Rajeff in recent years. Today anglers may visit Golden Gate Park and practice casting at the Angler's Lodge and Casting Pools that have been under the custodianship of the Golden Gate Angling and Casting Club since 1938. Through the years many people have enjoyed watching the club's fly casting tournaments, and attended the club's free classes in fly tying and fly casting. (The clubs predate the Anglers' Club of New York, founded in 1906, and the Flyfishers' Club in London, England, that was founded in 1911.) Members of the San Francisco club in recent years have competed in Oslo, Johannesburg, Melbourne and various other cities.

In 1888 young Robert Pickering Arkley caught his first trout on Chambers Creek near Tacoma, Washington. "We had just come over from the English-Scottish border on the River Tyne and had settled in Tacoma," he said later. "We used to go up Chambers Creek on the old steam engine—the Puffing Billy, we called it—and walk another mile or

so. The Royal Coachman! . . . of course that's the favorite cutthroat fly . . . if you can't catch a cutthroat on that or a Professor or a Brown Hackle, just wrap her up and go home!"

During the 1880's the West really opened up with many Americans coming west on the new transcontinental railroads. By 1900 five major railroads reached to the Pacific coast and these promptly brought thousands of settlers, many of whom were fishermen.

In 1889 a young newspaper reporter named Rudyard Kipling (1865–1936) came to Oregon to write about the life of the new settlers. Some of the natives took him and his companion from California out to the nearby Clackamas River to fish for steelhead. After catching some, he wrote:

"I have lived!

"The American continent may now sink under the sea, for I have taken the best of it, and the best was neither dollars, love, nor real estate."

Near the end of his story he confessed to his editor, "Very solemnly and thankfully we put up our rods–it was glory enough for all time–and returned to the farmhouse weeping tears of pure joy."

Frank Wire (1880–1964) was one of Oregon's most famous early sportsmen and he learned fly fishing from his father about 1895. He was a skilled craftsman who tied flies, built bamboo fly rods and took time to teach others these skills out of his sheer love for the sport. A lifelong student of wildlife and environments from the wild Oregon coast to the Oregon mountains and deserts, he served as director of Oregon's Fish & Game Commission for many years, and was one of the first to support the idea of fly fishing only on certain fine streams.

Another remarkable Oregon angler is Erskine Wood. He has shared many bits of history in his fascinating book titled *Fishing* and published in a limited edition of 150 copies for Christmas, 1968. A highlight of the book describes how Wood, at age 13, spent several months on the Nespilem River . . . "In the narrow valley which it drains, Chief Joseph–Thunder-Rolling-on-the-Mountains,–and his band of Nez Perces, had their camp. It was a life to rejoice a boy's heart."

In 1888 Wood, a boy 11 years old, went fishing with his famous father, Lt. Charles Erskine Scott Wood, in a private car owned by the Oregon Railroad & Navigation Company. The other fishermen in the party included Erskine's "Uncle Gibbon who was a major general at Gettysburg in charge of the Iron Brigade, and was in charge of the troops that surprised Chief Joseph's Nez Perces at Montana's Bighole River."

By the 1890's when many of the timberlands of the West were being logged, sportsmen were buying land for the fishing privileges in remote areas. In Idaho's Island Park area sportsmen bought land along the Snake River, Henry's Lake and many creeks. History books report that "when paradise-seeking sportsmen found this God-given natural haven, they jubilantly rejoiced because they also found trout fishing and game hunting beyond their wildest expectations." One homestead near Island Park was purchased as a private fishing club by some sportsmen from Utah and California, and is famous to this day–The Flat Rock Club. The members specialized in fly fishing. And still do.

Idaho's Silver Creek first attracted international attention in 1902 when Harry C. Shellworth (1877–1973) of Boise played host to J. J. Hardy, a director of Hardy Bros., the famous world's angling supply specialists of Alnwick, England. Hardy's visit to Silver Creek came after he decided to fish the world's ten greatest trout streams before he died. Stillworth's son, Gene, remembers the visit, "We all went to the stream by buckboards and the fishing was so good we could have filled a gunny sack in half an hour. Mr. Hardy was pleased."

In 1906 three remarkable anglers–Dean Witter, Lee Richardson and Seth Blake–started their careers, and all have written about their experiences.

Dean Witter lived in San Francisco and started his angling career on California's McCloud River which he reached by train and wagon, and later went north to Oregon's McKenzie and Metolius as well as the Deschutes River, Elk Lake and Paulina Lake. He went on through the years to fish many of the best waters in Idaho, Montana, British Columbia, Chile, Argentina and New Zealand as described in his book, *Meanderings of a Fisherman* . . . a charming record of an angler's life with many friends on the best rivers of the world and described by beautifully-drawn maps.

Lee Richardson started to fish with a fly for sea-run cutthroats in the Nehalem, an Oregon coast stream bordered in those days by tall Douglas fir trees. "My grandfather unfolded for me the mysteries and joys of the fly rod. I recall his ancient fly box and I can see the old gentleman seated in the shade of a giant maple, his vise anchored in a convenient log, tying the popular flies of the day.

"The scene I remember best was that of my mother as she cast her fly in the shadows of alders on a beautiful bit of fly water near the old Pigeon Tree. Attired in the outdoor costume of the day–middy blouse and bloomers, her long black hair in braids, Indian-style, she made an unforgettable picture as the river swirled around and she made her way through the fast water."

Seth Blake caught his first steelhead on the Rogue (where his great-grandfather had settled in 1854) after driving by horse and buggy to Gold Beach from their ranch just south of the Chetco River. In later years, Blake wrote, "my fly fishing mentor was Joe Wharton, that gentle and kindly man whose knowledge of the subject seemed limitless. He owned the tackle shop in Grants Pass where he dispensed steelhead flies, Leonard Rods, Hardy reels and leaders, plus the usual line of tackle. He was always willing to take time to answer questions regarding location of good water and how to fish it. I learned to wade the riffles in a pair of jeans, old shoes with hobnails, and a shirt; an adequate outfit from mid-July to late fall when steelhead fishing was at its best."

The summer of 1912 saw a historic breakthrough for the stocking of trout in Oregon's remote lakes. A specially-designed railroad car named *The Rainbow* was used to deliver trout fingerlings to Oregon guides and sportsmen's organizations who then used wagons and pack

"Going Fishing in Montana," a photograph from the Museum collection.

horses to transport them to remote lakes in the Cascade Mountains. In the words of sports writer Tom McAllister, "*The Rainbow* was part of a golden era when a license cost one dollar, the limit was 75 trout and the elbow room unlimited. It ushered in the first fish culture work in Oregon with gusto, style and fun."

In 1913 one of Canada's greatest characters, Brigadier General Noel Money C.M.G., D.S.O., started building his famous Qualicum Inn overlooking British Columbia's Qualicum Bay. World War I broke out and he went off to fight with Allenby in Egypt. After the war he came back and completed his Inn. A pioneer flyfisher for winter steelhead, General Money persuaded his fishing companion, Roderick Haig-Brown, "that winter steelhead could be taken on a fly as a general thing and not just a fluke." The General often used a 15-foot, two-handed salmon rod to catch steelhead.

One of the most talented, generous anglers and teachers of Oregon flyfishers and fly tyers was Maurice "Mooch" Abrams (1867–1936). Born in Roseburg, Oregon, he roamed the North Umpqua country in the 1880's where he became a friend of the Umpqua Indians. About 1914 he moved to Portland and made many friends among the members of the Meadow Lake Club and the Multnomah Anglers Club. Abrams often fished the Necanicum along with the Godfrey brothers, Bert and Clare, of Seaside, who created the famous Spruce fly that Mooch admired and recommended to his friends for catching sea-run cutthroat. A talented fly caster, Abrams coached many Oregon anglers, including Marvin Hedge who went on to break the nation's and the world's record in fly casting.

In July of 1915 the first automobiles began to invade Yellowstone Park. Its great trout streams and natural wonders made it the first national park accessible to anyone who could afford a car.

In 1916 when the Rogue River was not very well known, an Oregon angler named W. F. Backue told the readers of *Field & Stream* that many western anglers considered it the finest fly fishing stream in the world. "The fish here are a species of sea-run rainbow trout, usually called steelhead," he wrote. "To be sure, it's not easy fishing. To take steelhead trout with the fly on the Rogue requires long and skillful casting, deep wading and lots of it, and a knowledge of the habits of the big fish. It's hard fishing, but who wants to get six and eight-pound fish without wading for them?"

To those of us who fished with him, Hans Looff (1899–1969) was one of the most charming anglers on the Rogue River. He caught his first steelhead there on July 8, 1920 at Leaning Tree Riffle where he had gone with Joe Wharton in Joe's Model T. "What a prize! I wanted to go right home," Hans said, "and show that steelhead to my pretty bride." Of Joe Wharton, Hans wrote, "I will always see him in his little tackle shop – deep-chested, big-footed and smiling – a great and good man with many talents. Most of us fishermen have had, or will have, such a man to help us keep our lines tight and our rods up."

Early in the 1920's Franz B. Pott of Missoula, Montana, produced the first trout flies with woven hair hackle. The hackle was used in an "ingenious series of woven-bodied hair flies known to fishermen as 'Mite' flies." Many western anglers still use these flies.

George F. Grant, the famous fly tyer and conservationist now living in Butte, Montana, started fishing the Big Hole River there in 1925. He tied flies with woven hair bodies and hackles and wrote two books on the subject. Long admired as one of the leading anglers of Montana, Grant operated a tackle shop at West Yellowstone in 1947 that was later purchased and enlarged by Bud Lilly and his family.

The 1930's brought hundreds of new roads for easier access to the streams and lakes. Roderick Haig-Brown settled in Campbell, River, B.C., and started his career as a writer and conservationist after three years of work as a logger, trapper, guide and fisherman there. C. L. "Outdoor" Franklin was charming his friends on the Klamath River, and Marvin Hedge was practicing to break the world's fly-casting record. The Oregon Deschutes Club was getting started and in Ireland Michael O'Malley was planning a trip to catch Oregon steelhead.

Early in 1932 two great Canadian anglers – Roderick Haig-Brown (1908–1976) and Tommy Brayshaw (1884–1967) met for the first time at Campbell River. Tommy was bending over a massive tyee salmon, according to Roddy, "making little sketches and notes about the fish's shape, color, condition, with appropriate comments on its sexual proclivities and religious affiliations. In due time the tyee became a model, accurately carved from yellow cedar and painted in the full glory of its maturing coloration." The men became close friends, and Roddy has become something of a legend among fishermen, conservationists and collectors of angling books as millions of anglers know throughout the world wherever there are fishermen who seek trout, steelhead or salmon.

In 1933 Oregon's Deschutes Club was founded by a group of 30 Oregon flyfishers on one of the world's great trout streams. One of the West's biggest trout streams and well protected by a steep canyon with no access roads except the private road along the river, the river deserved, and was given, a special honor. A book designed and written to capture the spirit of the river was published in 1966– *The History of the Deschutes Club* written by member Berkeley Snow . . . "commemorating 33 years of sport, conservation and friendship. The book is respectfully dedicated to the 30 founding fathers whose sporting spirit, vision, wisdom and energy created the Deschutes Club."

C. L. "Outdoor" Franklin (1877–1959) started to fish California's Klamath River in 1924. His largest fish there weighed 21½ pounds and was taken at Big Bend Riffle below Manzanita Bar in 1932. Through the years two of his admirers and fishing companions were Milt Kahl and Ken Anderson, executives and artists for Walt Disney in Southern California. As Kahl wrote in a tribute, "Franklin was one of these rare individuals who, in addition to handling their equipment beautifully, possess a mysterious 'fish sense' . . . he either smelled them or used telepathy." To appreciate Franklin's character one must read Milt Kahl's story about him in the December 1964 issue of *The Creel.*

One of Oregon's first great flycasters was Marvin Hedge (1896–1969) who broke the world record for distance. He spliced his own lines and helped John Wilson design his powerful fly rods. In 1934 Hedge perfected his equipment and went to St. Louis where he competed against the best American casters. He broke the world's record by 22 feet! . . . a record that had not been broken since 1924.

During the 1930's thousands of Oregon fishermen and their families learned to enjoy the writings of Ben Hur Lampman (1886–1954). A newspaper columnist who also wrote stories for magazines, Lampman fished the Rogue River and, later, the lakes and streams on the coast. In 1947 Lampman was honored at a party on the Rogue where the governor announced that a stretch of Ben's favorite water was being made a state park named for him there at Gold Hill. Lampman's book of fishing essays is titled *A Leaf from French Eddy,* and is read around the world today.

Famous rodmaker Edwin C. Powell (1878–1966) was born in Gilroy, California and later lived in Red Bluff and Marysville, California. His passion for the outdoors and the streams of his native Sierra were expressed in the fine fly rods he created. Lee Richardson's tribute describes him best: "Few men in their lifelong endeavors have enjoyed a life as rewarding or satisfying as E. C. Powell, and fewer still have given so much pleasure to others as the grand old man of Marysville. His was indeed a labor of love, with

no thought of personal gain, his only reward the satisfaction of building a fly rod that would give utmost joy to his faithful clientele."

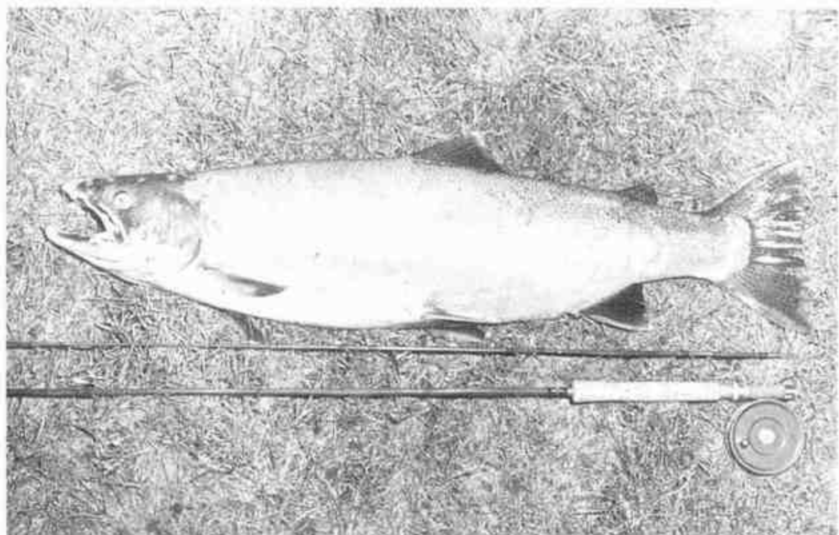
An ardent Irish angler named Michael O'Malley arrived in Oregon in April of 1937 and, with true fisherman's luck, encountered Mike Kennedy, one of the world's most skillful steelhead fishermen. How they became friends and caught steelhead on the Kalama River is one of the great stories told by raconteur Kennedy. After catching some steelhead, O'Malley decided to stay. He ran an ad in the *Portland Oregonian* newspaper asking for help. The ad read: "Wanted, a middle-aged woman who can drive a car, cook fish, fry spuds, and row a boat." In September O'Malley went on down to the Rogue River where he also enjoyed fine sport catching steelhead. He enjoyed Oregon steelhead fishing so much that he returned from Ireland every spring for the next four years.

In 1937 Dan Bailey opened his now-famous tackle shop in Livingston, Montana, where he decided to live after leaving New York. Dan's shop soon became famous for the "trophy boards." Anglers who catch and report in with a trout over four pounds caught on a fly will have its silhouette traced on a piece of plywood. The plaque is posted for posterity on the wall with several hundred other plaques.

Letcher Lambuth (1889–1974) of Seattle was a talented angler who also designed and made fly rods admired by such anglers as Tommy Brayshaw and Roddy Haig-Brown. About 1936 he began collecting trout stream insects. Pat Trotter admired Lambuth and has written an account of how Letcher researched insects on many streams from the Eel River in California to the Bella Coola in British Columbia. Later he studied and collected insects from the Deschutes, McKenzie, Yakima and Wenatchee Rivers.

Walt Bush (1907–1972) was admired as a sportsman and game warden on the Kitsap peninsula of Washington. He tied flies, made fly rods and served as a teacher for young anglers, including Bob Wethern and Dave Carlson. He will be remembered, also, for trapping wild cutthroat trout and taking the eggs to the state hatchery at Skokomish. Later he stocked the fish in remote beaver ponds where some of us later enjoyed great sport under the capable guidance of Bob Wethern.

In 1939 Enos Bradner became the founding president of the Washington Fly Fishing Club. For many years he fished the western streams and wrote about fly fishing for the *Seattle Times*, and became the dean of Washington's trout and steelhead fishermen. In 1950



top: Marion Lake, Oregon, about 1909.
middle: a good day's catch on Silver Creek, Idaho, about 1940.
bottom: a Sol Duc River steelhead caught by Syd Glasso in 1959. Photo courtesy of Orvis.

his book *Northwest Angling* was published; it contained two color plates of trout and steelhead flies, including such favorites as Skykomish Sunrise, Kalama Special and Lady Godiva for steelhead, and Carey Special, California Coachman, and Montana Bucktail for trout.

During the 1940's Clark Van Fleet and Claude Kreider wrote many features for sports magazines as they traveled the fishing waters of the West. Van Fleet specialized on steelhead while Kreider fished for and wrote about trout.

The golden era of British Columbia's Kamloops trout celebrated a very special occasion in 1939 with the arrival of Lee Richardson. "We will never forget it," Lee says, "because until then few if any had seen trout-fishing its equal." Lee and a friend went northeast out of Vancouver on the Canadian National R.R. to a whistle stop north of Kamloops, and on to Lake Ta-Weel via an old Ford to road's end and then by saddle horse to the camp.

"Ta-Weel must ever remain one of the four or five most memorable of all my fishing adventures," Lee wrote in his book. "Never again have I seen a hatch of sedges such as we saw that day on the lake of the loons, and not since that day have I taken such numbers of big trout on the dry fly. In a lifetime, the man who can count such days on the fingers of one hand is indeed a lucky fellow."

Nevada's Pyramid Lake had been famous for giant trout long before it produced the world's record 42-pound cutthroat in 1933. Although some used spinning gear and some trolled, several well-known anglers, including Herbert Hoover and Clark Gable, fished with a fly. Described as the most beautiful desert lake in America, Pyramid still attracts hundreds of anglers (the lake is 18 miles in diameter) in January, February and March each year when the big ones feed near the shore. The region is still as wild as ever. For a taste of the old West, replete with Paiute Indians, ranchers and working cowboys, one should stop at Sudcliff's restaurant at Pyramid Lake.

The stage was set for tube floating on a grand scale when, during the 1920's and 1930's, the hydro-electric and irrigation dams created many reservoirs throughout the West. Most of these were stocked with trout (some with bass, crappies and blue gills) and this led to the sport of float-tube fly fishing. Among the outstanding tubers today are Hal Janssen of California; Del Canty of Leadville, Colorado, widely recognized as a trophy fisherman; Ruel Stayner of Twin Falls; Darrel Grim of Nampa, also a trophy fisherman "who listens to a different drummer and treats each fly as though it's a part of his family"; Clayne Baker, Glen Allen, Mary Taylor and Ken Magee, all of Boise, Idaho. To this day Idahoans are noted for their fishing talk and their desire to fish 12 months a year.

Washington is the home of many part-time tube fishermen. Both Bob Wethern of Union, and Fenton Roskelly of Spokane, have written well about the pleasure of float tubing and converted others to this style of fishing. A versatile angler, Roskelly has written fishing features for the *Spokane Daily Chronicle* for many years.

World War II brought thousands of servicemen and adventurous families to the western states to enjoy the scenery, skiing, hunting and fishing. My wife, Elaine, and I were among these who explored the wilderness areas and met ranch families who raised cattle, mined, and hunted and fished. The life was still exciting. The natives made the newcomers welcome up and down the Pacific coast and over into the mountain states west of the Rockies. We were soon to explore the backcountry, hike through several life zones on a weekend—marshes and stream banks up into mountain meadows, hearing the screams of eagles and the whistles of marmots while we crossed the tracks of bobcats, bears and coyotes.

We were to hear Roddy Haig-Brown say, "The whole world is rivers . . . every inch of ground you stand on is the watershed of some river." We were to meet and fish with Judge James Crawford of whom our friend Dale LaFollette once wrote, "Experienced in the ways of anglers, including attorneys known to be fly fishermen, the Judge has observed 'Their behavior in court has a distant quality in the spring of the year as Opening Day approaches.' "

We were to meet the great fly tyers: Audrey Joy of Portland, Stella Ely of Blue River on the McKenzie, E. H. "Polly" Rosborough of Chiloquin, Wayne "Buz" Buszek and his wife, Virginia, of Visalia, California, and Doug Prince of Monterey, California, who mastered the art of tying quill-bodied nymphs with peccary bristles and tied the first versions of the Owen's River Hopper and the Yellow Skater.

A highlight of 1961 was the birth of the Flyfisher's Club of Oregon on February 7. On March 7, the club met to elect officers and announced the purposes of the club. Among the nine purposes of the club were these:

- To preserve and perpetuate the traditions and art of fly fishing.
- To assist members in the interchange of information and knowledge relating to the delights and mysteries of fly fishing in Oregon and other areas of interest to members.
- To publish a journal to be known as *The Creel* recording the angling ac-

left: Mirror Lake, Yosemite Valley, California, 1872.
right: "A dry camp," photograph from the Museum collection.
far right: Mr. and Mrs. Wallace Beery at Henry's Lake, Idaho, about 1932.

complishments, adventures and speculations of the members and other fly fishing devotees.

The 20th edition of *The Creel* was mailed to several hundred members last February, and continues to be an outstanding collection of angling photographs and western flyfishing experiences and commentaries.

The highlight of 1965 was the creation of the Federation of Fly Fishermen with many noteworthy anglers from U.S. and Canada meeting on June 18-19-20 at Eugene, Oregon. Outstanding anglers attending included Gene Anderegg, General Chairman, Tommy Brayshaw, Lee Wulff, Frank Wire, Ed Strickland, Enos Bradner, Marvin Hedge, Ashley Hewitt, Bill Nelson, Jim Green, Ed Zern and Rex Gerlach.

The Federation of Fly Fishermen's purposes are well expressed on the membership applications today and in *The Flyfisher Magazine* that has appeared regularly since 1968. The first editorial board included Arnold Gingrich, Director, L. James Bashline, Hermann Kessler, Gene Anderegg, E. J. Strickland, Lee Wulff and Ed Zern.

Another event made history in Oregon in 1973 when the Flyfisher Foundation, the first world-wide organization of anglers, was formed after much preparatory work by two Portland attorneys, Herbert C. Hardy and Herbert H. Anderson. The 26 directors included anglers from Oregon, Washington, California, Montana, Idaho, Arizona, Alaska, Hawaii, British Columbia, and two from the United Kingdom.

The purposes of the Flyfisher Foundation are in keeping with the spirit of sportsmanship and sense of history that motivated the officers, directors and donors:

1. To preserve and perpetuate the traditions, history, art and literature of flyfishing. To serve all anglers and the public by providing facilities that are officially recognized as a trustworthy museum and library for tax-deductible donations of books, libraries, manuscripts, art work, flies, rods, lines, reels and other memorabilia.

2. To encourage and enhance aesthetic appreciation by the angling and general publics of the scenery, flora and fauna of waters and watersheds.

3. To provide education and instruction to all interested in the art of flyfishing.

4. To encourage writers, artists and photographers to portray the beauty, sportsmanship and pleasures of flyfishing and fly dressing.

5. To sponsor formal exhibits in libraries, schools, universities, museums and public centers locally, nationally and internationally.

6. To serve as a monitor and disseminator of information and photographs of interest and value to ichthyologists, aquatic biologists, entomologists and other scientists concerned with the habitat and genetics of trout, salmon, grayling, steelhead and other fish that may be caught on a fly. To publicize efforts in these areas through publication of books, booklets, bulletins and keepsakes.

Angler E. Roland Harriman (1896–1977) of the Union Pacific Railroad is remembered for his generosity and his love for a great trout stream. Some of the best dry fly water in America flows through the 10,000-acre Harriman State Park and Wildlife Sanctuary near Island Park, Idaho. The river and two lakes are a part of the original Railroad Ranch, so named because it had been owned by the officials of the Oregon Short Line since the 1890's. Harriman bought the ranch in 1954 and, after enjoying it with his family every summer for 20 years, gave it to the state of Idaho in 1975. In his book, *I Reminisce,* Roland reports that his father, Edward H. Harriman, had told his sons, "Leave whatever you touch better off for having touched it." The new state park is evidence that Roland took those words to heart.

Joe Brooks (1909–1970) is remembered by many as one of the most talented and respected anglers of the West. An admirer of Montana's Big Hole River, Joe and his wife Mary started fishing there in the summer of 1950. He lived in New Jersey and traveled all over the world fishing and writing about catching fish for *Outdoor Life*. He caught the world record sea bass on a fly at the mouth of Oregon's Umpqua River but his real love was fly fishing for trout. He introduced and converted many to the sport of fly fishing; they all admired him and his three books on fishing. Gradually he became a legend throughout America. When Joe died, Mary moved to Montana and bought a condominium at Paradise Valley south of Livingston near Joe's grave beside his favorite Yellowstone River.

Western anglers have a heritage of adventure and a love of exploring new water. Some of their families panned for gold along with their homesteading, and frequently went fishing for food. Many boys took to fly fishing when they learned that skilled casting and bold stream strategy would deceive more trout and give them greater pleasure than fishing with worms. This set the stage for the future of many trips into the backcountry, including those haunted streams in the Oregon Coast Range that inspired Ben Hur Lampman to write his famous essay *Opening Day*. Here is the first paragraph:

"Where shall we go, you say? Let's go

back to the place where the tall fern is parted under the firs at the brink of the canyon, and the black trail plunges down, with the handholds of sapling and root, to white water – down, down to the South Fork. With the salmonberry blooming and the blue grouse hooting, and somewhere a wild pigeon mourning its heart out. Now the last few yards of the trail are steep as a church roof – but here, gray-walled and clamoring, unforgotten, with a hatch dancing above the green swirl by the black rock, here is the South Fork. Do you remember? Let's go back."

In a similar manner Idaho trout streams touched the heart of Ernest Hemingway. When one of his fishing and hunting companions died unexpectedly, he gave this eulogy at his funeral in Sun Valley:

> Best of all he loved the fall
> The leaves yellow on the cottonwoods
> Leaves floating on the trout streams
> And above the hills
> The high blue windless sky
> ... Now he will be a part of them forever.

Up in British Columbia the magic environments touched many anglers deeply, including Richard Ciccimara who wrote these words about his favorite Cowichan River:

"There is a mystery about the river, as keenly felt today as it must have been felt many centuries ago, of a different world in a different element. The dividing line is the surface of the water, and there is something delightfully unpredictable in our very slight ability to penetrate the mystery . . ."

And if you come fishing in the West you may find yourself walking slowly, as I have, along Silver Creek some quiet morning in June . . . walking along the slopes and meadows watching the trout rise nearby . . . near the bright yellow flowers of the cinquefoil, patches of wild licorice and the violet-blue blossoms of wild iris . . . with sandhill cranes nearby and red-winged blackbirds calling among the cattails and bullrushes.

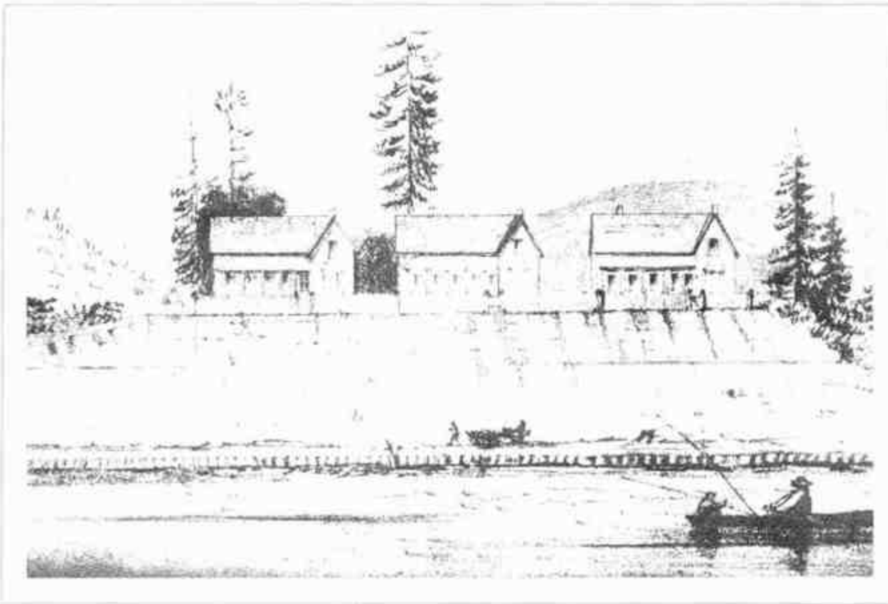
Historically, Roderick Haig-Brown stands out above all of our western writers on fly fishing. His successor is Steve Raymond of Seattle who has written two outstanding books and honored Roddy with a heart-warming tribute when he died at age 68 in 1976. As a salute to Haig-Brown I will close this brief history with two of his classic paragraphs spoken in 1961 to a group of 200 Oregon flyfishers:

"The fly fisherman's sport is in many things besides the catching of fish. We pride ourselves in knowing something of our fish, how they live and behave, what water conditions they need for living and breeding, how and when and where they feed. The insect life of lakes and streams has always been a special part of a fly fisherman's study. It is satisfying to be able to recognize and name waterside trees and shrubs, to trace with a knowing eye the passage of the previous winter's floods, watch the build up of a gravel bar from season to season or the scouring of a new pool.

"A good part of the pleasure of going fishing is in understanding these things, watching them and recording them in the mind, being able to name them and hold them for yourselves as valued things. Identifying them and knowing something about them gives you a special claim on your own world of the water's edge, and helps to make you a part of it instead of a mere intruder. This to me is a very important thing. It gives a sense of identification with the whole natural world which I think most of us are looking for."

For most of us, that is the spirit of fly fishing in the West today.

One of the author's favorite Idaho streams, whose name he will not divulge.



Rockwell's drawing of salmon fishing on the Columbia.

Pacific Salmon, 1876

by Cleveland Rockwell

In 1876 I was engaged in making a survey of the mouth of the Columbia, and was anchored in the shelter of Baker's Bay, just inside of Cape Disappointment, but a rifle shot from the ocean beach. This is a most picturesque spot. The cape is formed by the northern shore of the river projecting around from seaward in the form of a hook, and is composed of high, basaltic, rocky hills, which are very precipitous on the ocean side, and are clothed to their summits with a heavy forest of Douglas fir or Oregon pine, and a vigorous growth of deciduous bushes of maple, and luxuriant ferns.

The water was salt and clear. Well do I remember my first salmon taken in these waters. Equipped with a good, two-handed English salmon rod of ash, with lancewood tip, one hundred yards of braided line, and the best flies, all furnished me by a valued friend. I left the vessel's side, alone in my dingy, to try for silver-side salmon.

No salmon had ever been known before to take a fly on the Columbia River, and I had very little hope of success. I had but a few hundred yards to pull from the vessel before arriving near the steep and rocky shores of the bay, and, laying in the oars, I took my rod and commenced casting. Though an old hand with an eight-ounce trout rod, I found a two-handed rod an awkward thing. However, I soon succeeded in making a cast far enough away from the boat to hook a salmon. What a thrill of excitement accompanied striking the hook into the solid tongue of that first salmon – and how my heart rushed up into my throat as the alarmed fish made his first frantic rush for liberty! There was an old log or spar, with a ring-bolt in the end, projecting above the water, and its bottom fast in the mud, and this spar was not two rods from the rocky bluff. With what agony of apprehension I saw my salmon making for the spar, with the line singing through the water! Turn him I could not, though the good rod was nearly bent double, and holding the rod with one hand, I seized an oar with the other and tried to scull the boat near enough to pass the rod over the spar as the fish went behind it. Alas! the salmon was too fast for me, and in a desperate moment, as the salmon was drawing my tip around the spar, I cast the rod as far as I could throw it on the other side of the spar, where it sank in two fathoms of water. I stood for a moment in despair at what I had done; then took up the oars and pulled for the schooner.

After getting my sailing master in the boat, and with a long pike pole to which I lashed my salmon gaff, we pulled off again to the scene of disaster, and almost immediately succeeded in fishing up the rod. The line had been run out clear to the barrel of the reel. Of course I had lost my first salmon, and probably half my line, and silently and in sorrow I reeled it in, when, whizz! out flew the handle from my fingers, and away went my salmon, fresh for a second heat.

The salmon and I fought it out on "that line" all around the harbor, and half the military post was down on the shore to see the fun; and when finally I thrust the gaff into his shining belly and lifted him into the boat, a cheer went up from the shore, which, with the salmon thrashing around in the boat, made me feel quite proud of the adventure. He weighed twenty-five pounds.

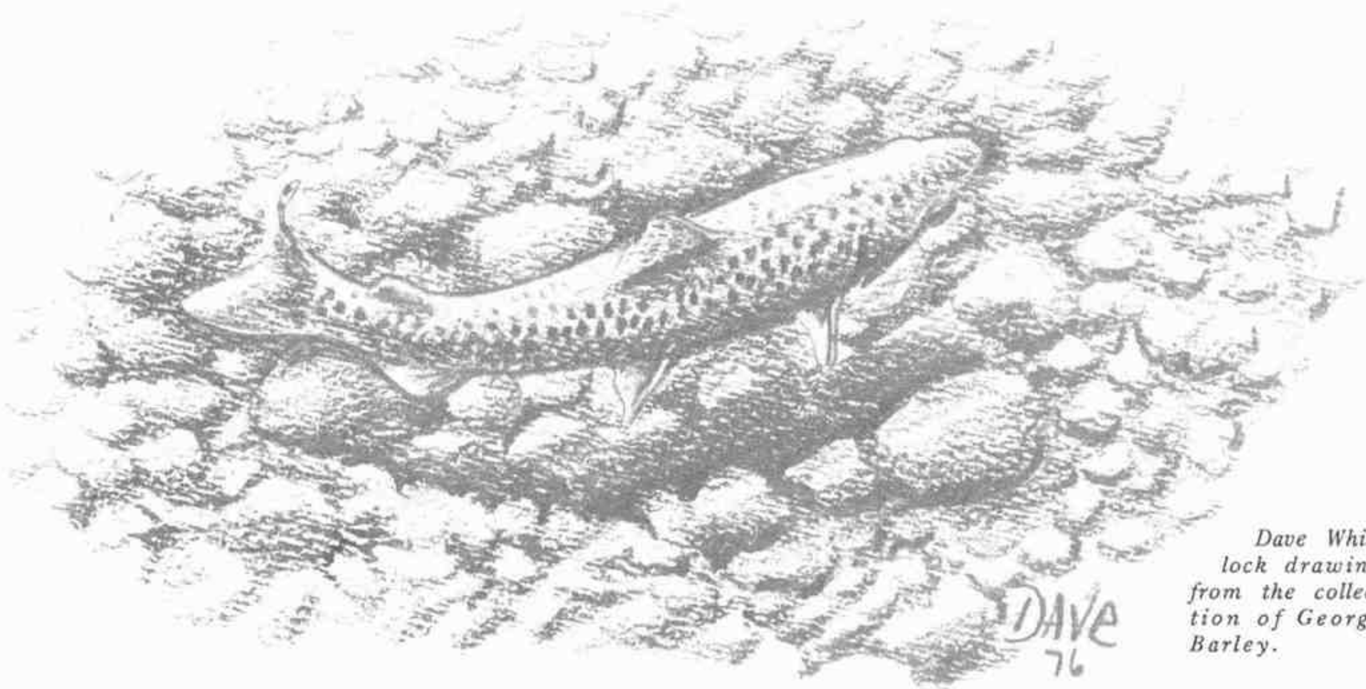
The genial and enthusiastic lighthouse keeper at the Cape became much excited and expressed the profoundest regret that he had lived there ten years and never knew that salmon could be caught with a fly. He came on board to examine my tackle, and I supplied him with a few flies.

What was my astonishment to see him on the bay the very next day, and with the most extraordinary tackle which was ever presented to a salmon! He had sawed a strip from a redwood board and dressed it down to the thickness of an inch, and with a very respectable taper. Pieces of wire driven into the wood at suitable intervals served as guides, or rings, and for a reel, the iron wheels of a child's toy cart were rigged with a crank and securely lashed to the pole. Truly, in his case, necessity was the mother of invention, and with this remarkable outfit he succeeded in catching many a lusty salmon. Not being able to cast with this apparatus, he caught all his salmon by trolling.

In a week every rooster on the military post presented a most forlorn appearance; necks and tails had both been plucked to make salmon flies.

Many a salmon have I taken from the sparkling bay under Cape Disappointment since that day, but the lively adventure with my first salmon remains an episode of supreme pleasure.

This article first appeared in the Pacific Monthly, *in October, 1903, and came to our attention through republication in* The Creel, *the journal of the Flyfisher's Club of Oregon. More information about Cleveland Rockwell can be found in the book* Cleveland Rockwell, Scientist and Artist, 1837–1907, *by Franz Stenzel, published by the Oregon Historical Society in 1972.*



Dave Whitlock drawing from the collection of George Barley.

McKenzie River Rainbows

Oregon trout fishing in the 1930's

by Letcher Lambuth

As we schedule a fairly active fishing season, a brief description of some of our typical trout fishing trips may be the easiest means of conveying to the reader a conception of conditions on our public waters. If I refer to occasions on which fish were taken, it should be understood that there were other days on which we were not successful. However, we have never had an unsatisfactory or disagreeable experience. Our trips are planned with some care. Our companion is always congenial. We usually have some new equipment to be tested, and there are insects to be collected and wild life to be observed. We seek relaxation, fresh air and exercise. We enjoy the exchange of ideas on a companionable basis. And so the day's experience is always rich even though the trout are not on that occasion responsive.

As a rule we open the dry fly season on the McKenzie River in Central Oregon. This is boat fishing on a stream too large for satisfactory wading. The river is probably at its best about the middle of June, but it is fishable much earlier and we usually plan a day or two about the 20th of May as this gives us the enjoyment of a longer season. There are several resorts along the upper river where accommodations and boatmen are available. We patronize one of the older establishments which has been in operation for more than thirty years. It is a comfortable but not pretentious farm house that has been converted to a fishing lodge.

Last year instead of making a day's drive of the 350-mile trip from Seattle, we went by the night train. In the morning we were met by car in Eugene, and during the thirty-mile drive up the river we engaged in a discussion of our driver's suggestion that perhaps certain insects are taken by the trout as a dietary necessity for acids or juices not provided by other food. It was a subject calculated to put us in the right frame of mind for the day's activities.

We had changed, breakfasted, greased our lines, and recrossed the swinging bridge from the house to the road by the time our boatmen were ready, at

about nine o'clock, with the light, roomy, highsided boats on trailers attached to the cars for the trip to our stations. The river was high but clear and in fine condition. We drove three miles to the dam, assisted the boat down the narrow-gauge track, set up our rods, and were afloat. The air was charged with the translucent green of water and its bordering verdure; the sky was a ribbon of blue between the tree tops. Our excitement caught and held the glints of sun on leaf and water, the white surging foam, the babbling voices of the river. It was, in brief, the time and place for fishing.

The usual random cast in this boat fishing is quartering down stream with as much slack thrown on the water upstream from the fly as conditions will permit. It is not easy fishing. Sometimes the currents are such that line may be fed out as the cast drifts away, but if too much line is out, it is difficult to set the hook to a strike. At other times the likely spots must be reached with one quick and accurate cast as the boat floats rapidly down a heavy run. Two flies are customarily used, not in the expectation of catching two fish, but to keep closer track of the change from hour to hour in the pattern preferred by the fish; both are floated dry, and the taking fly is on the end. Occasionally the boatman can hold the boat in the current so that upstream casts may be made to a feeding fish in the eddies along the shore under the trees. Another method, sometimes very effective, is to use fairly heavily hackled flies, well greased, in the fast riffles; before the hand fly is drowned at the end of the drift, the cast is dragged to the surface and flipped upstream a short distance to give the appearance of an insect drifting down stream and fluttering upstream in laying its eggs. The strike in this type of casting is very fast and exciting, as fish of one to two pounds frequently come almost horizontally out of a wave to take the fly, often in the air.

The boatmen are men of excellent calibre, capable of meeting the emergencies that may arise, willing to work hard, and able to make many helpful suggestions if they find that these are welcomed. Our fly patterns are somewhat unconventional, being our interpretation of the stream insects. Many of the boatmen tie flies, and as they are on the river almost every day during the entire season, their patterns are effective.

We drifted about eight miles of the river on the day I am writing of. In the tumultuous waters below the dam we took two fish, of something over a pound each, within the first half hour. An occasional fish was raised in the next three or four miles. We spent almost an hour on a big fellow of perhaps three pounds who was rising steadily to suck in some small insects which we were not able to capture and identify, in a little eddy under some overhanging brush just on the edge of the main current. I could not reach this spot from shore, and it was only afterward that I appreciated that my boatman must have shared my interest to hold me for so long in the swift current without question or complaint, and with only short periods of rest on a beach below. I raised this fish to my fly several times, but could not get him to take hold, and finally I put him down altogether.

We had lunch in the shade on a gravelly beach fringing a soft riffle. On this occasion a good hatch of May flies appeared and some large trout were taking them. We worked from shore, and took two or three, but they were shy or our patterns did not suit them, as results were not as great as our hopes. That evening, just before dark, over a gravel bar at the tail of a small island, there was a tremendous hatch of insects, largely red upright and yellow forked tail, and strangely enough, the only taking fly had a pink body and ginger palmer with bucktail wings. During this rise, I filled my limit of fifteen with fish of something under a pound, and we rowed the last mile in starlight to the waiting car.

Although the McKenzie is heavily fished, it has probably the finest rainbow trout fishing in any accessible Western river; the stream is large enough so that the fish have ample refuge, and food is plentiful so that growth is rapid. The river is heavily and intelligently planted by the Oregon State Game Commission. I prefer wading to boat fishing ordinarily, but this does not detract from my full enjoyment of the McKenzie trip. The run down the river is one of the most delightful of our out-of-doors experiences. At times we encounter quite heavy water. A year or two ago one of our party took moving pictures of our boats coming through Martin Rapids, a ladder of white water some two or three hundred yards long. When we viewed the film we were surprised to note that the boat and passengers were entirely concealed when between the rollers at the foot of the rapid. We occasionally have visiting anglers whom we are unwilling to take on our rougher expeditions. A man should have some experience, and should also be in first class condition, to enjoy submarining on foot up one of our turbulent Western streams. To these visitors, we have found the McKenzie trip almost always productive and always enjoyable.

We make another and less elaborate trip, to a smaller stream in the Grays Harbor district on the coast of central Washington. We leave Friday afternoon, spend Friday night at the comfortable hotel at Hoquiam, 90 miles from Seattle, and the next morning, early, we drive for an hour, change into waders and hike for an hour from bar to bar, as there is no trail, and then fish our way fairly rapidly, because fishable water is infrequent, two or three miles to the gorge. If we make this by noon, and have enough reserve energy, we take down our rods and hike over the hill another two miles, on an intercepted forest trail, to the upper river.

Below the gorge we usually find some large rainbows and cutthroats, that is, fish up to 21 or 22 inches in length. All appear to be sea-run fish as this is a relatively short stream. We fish this water both dry and wet, and there are eddies and riffles on which the fish sometimes take very freely. Often many fresh run steelhead have been seen, but we have not found these in taking mood, and would not have been anxious to pack them out; so we have not experimented with them. It is quite disconcerting to an angler submerged to the top of his waders and anxiously working with a long cast on a rising fish of two or three pounds, when suddenly, with a great splash, a steelhead of ten or twelve pounds leaps within a few feet of his face. This has happened to me on more than one occasion on this stream.

Above the gorge the conditions are quite different. The stream is smaller, a meandering trout stream of lovely conformation, and pan fish of 9 to 14 inches sometimes provide fast action on the dry fly. It is not alone the fishing that induces us to add this extra mileage to a day already full. Perhaps the sun is shining; perhaps the trail, when we reach it after a stiff climb out of the gorge, is a shady fern-bordered track through virgin timber; perhaps we want to strike out, after a morning of wallowing; I cannot quite name the enchantment that leads us on, but it is none the less irresistible.

Finally, we reluctantly turn homeward. A mile or two downstream past the water we have been fishing; two miles by trail to the gorge; two or three miles down the river, wading the riffles on feet becoming tender, and crossing the bars, to reach the car just before dark; dry clothes; hot thermos; headlights; rocking over the CCC road peering to see the deer whose eyes reflect our lights from the roadsides; hesitation until a cross skunk stalks muttering off the little bridge; more than three hours drive home, while aching muscles relax and tired eyes are held open with difficulty. A good full day.

Letcher Lambuth's account of rainbow trout fishing is taken from the recently published book, **Angler's Workshop,** *with the permission of the publisher, Champoeg Press.*

The Jim Pray Steelhead Flies

Jim Pray was among the most influential steelhead fly tiers. The important achievements of his career are related in several places, including Trey Combs' *Steelhead Fly Fishing and Flies* and an article written by Ted Trueblood (under the pen name of Thomas Hardin) in *True* Magazine in April of 1952. Rather than repeat that story again, we will hit some of the highlights of his career through a look at his flies. Our collection of Jim Pray flies was donated recently by Dr. Stanwood Schmidt, also of Eureka, who was a longtime friend of Jim Pray.

Starting at the lower left and moving clockwise, the first fly is an Orleans Barber, named by Jim Pray in 1934 in honor of a barber friend from Orleans, California. It was based on a simple gray hackle fly, and was tied with a red body of chenille or heavy floss. It remains a standard California pattern.

Above the Orleans Barber is a shrimp imitation which, according to Dr. Schmidt, was used for trolling.

Above the shrimp are two Orange Optics. Pray tied many variations on the optic style. He did not invent the optic pattern, but he was the first to tie optics for salmon and steelhead, and he deserves most of the credit for their popularization. He used bead chain for the head, and tubular beading for the bodies if additional weight was needed. His first use of optics was in 1940 on the Eel River; on the first morning of fishing he landed two silver salmon and four steelhead, and soon had many of his friends and customers using them. Above the Orange Optics, at the top of the picture, is a Mickey Finn Optic.

To the right and below the Mickey Finn are three variations on the Thor Pattern. The first is a Thor Optic, the other two are conventional Thor patterns, one tied with a feather wing. The Thor rivals the optics as Jim Pray's most famous and enduring fly pattern. He tied it in 1936, and on the day after Christmas it got its first test. Walter Thoresen, a friend of Pray's, took it to the Eel River and in quick order caught five steelhead, the largest of which weighed eighteen pounds and won first prize in the annual *Field and Stream* fishing contest. Two years later a Thor fly accounted for another first in the contest, and by then Jim Pray had named it in honor of its first user, Walter Thoresen (the museum also has several Thors tied by Mr. Thoresen, who sent them to us last year).

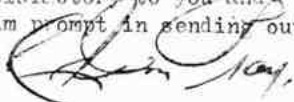
Walter Thoresen's fabulous day of fishing, as described above, took place in midstream, and while he was busy boating steelhead on the new fly pattern he was momentarily distracted by some action on the far shore. A young boy was in the process of landing a big steelhead under the watchful guidance of his father. The boy's fish weighed more than fourteen pounds and it won the juvenile division in the *Field and Stream* contest that year. The boy's name was Gene Silvius, and his father,

Eureka,Cal.-December-1940.

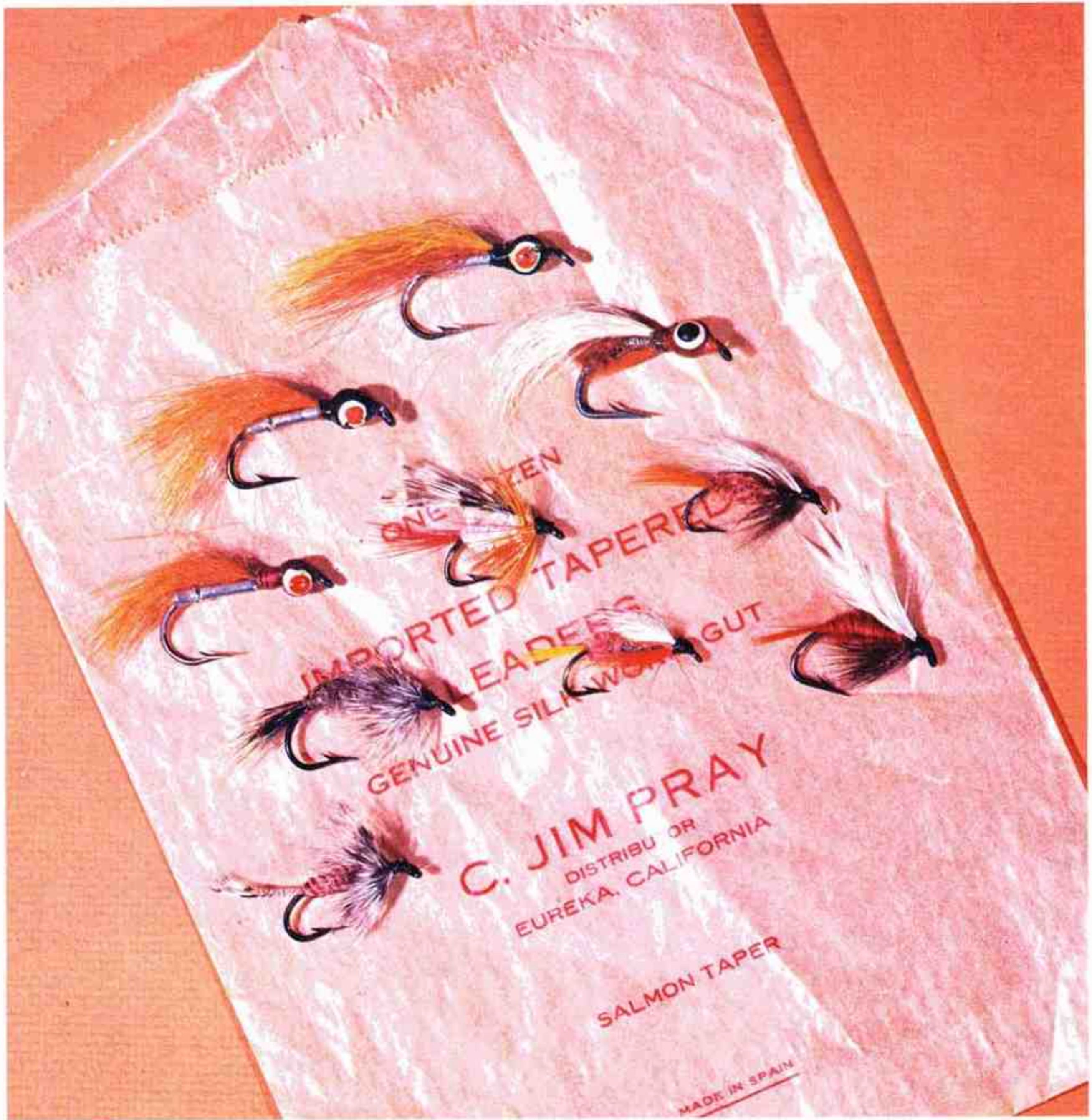
Dear Mr. Jennings;

We are having a great run of Steelhead and Salmon in the Eel River,and they are taking almost exclusively my Red Optic.On account of not having many in stock and the fact that they are slow to make I have been working until 3 and 4 oclock in the morning to get them out.It may rain any moment and muddy the stream and then it is all off for the Season.I want to send you fresh made flies and will get them to you as soon as possible.I am presuming you cannot fish with them at this time.Hoping this will be satisfactory to you and assuring you that most always I am prompt in sending out mail orders,I am,

Hastily yours



Post card from Jim Pray to Preston Jennings, from the Jennings Collection of the Museum.



Lloyd, like so many anglers in that area, was a friend of Jim Pray. Gene's fish was caught on a fly Lloyd had developed, called the Silvius White Bucktail. It later became known as the Nite Owl, and is the fly to the immediate left of the lowest Thor.

The fly in the center is a Klamath River pattern, the Joe O'Donnell. It is no longer in general use.

Pray developed other well known patterns. His variations on the Golden Demon (a New Zealand pattern brought to this country by Fred Burnham and Zane Grey) were the Silver and Black Demons. These, like his other patterns, were heavy enough to be used not only for steelhead but also for silver and king salmon. Though one is still likely to encounter many western fishermen who do not believe Pacific salmon can be taken on flies, anglers have been doing it for over a century (see article on page 7).

Jim Pray was born in Michigan in 1885, and started tying flies at eight years of age. He moved to California at twenty-three, and became one of the state's best known fly tiers. Among his customers, besides many outstanding anglers and writers, were better known figures like Herbert Hoover. When he died of cancer in 1952 it became obvious just how popular he had been. The list of honorary pallbearers read like a Who's Who of Western Angling. One obituary remarked that "Jim Pray's wealth was in friends" (his little shop had never brought in more money than would cover expenses, and sometimes not even that much). After the funeral, a group of his friends met one last time in his shop to drink a toast to his memory. They left a wreath on the door, with a card below it that read "Gone Fishing — C. Jim Pray, 1885–1952."

"Their numbers are perfectly fabulous"

Yellowstone Angling Excursions, 1867-1925

Yellowstone Park is famous for its outstanding fishing, but old timers like to point out the fishing "used to be even better." In fact, even the old timers don't know how true that is. In its first years, Yellowstone offered sport that is practically unheard of now. We offer here a few examples. One word of warning is necessary, though. Keep in mind that articles and journals of these kinds are "accidental history." Their writers probably did not expect them to endure, and so were not especially careful with facts. More interesting than the factual errors are the outright prevarications (forty-pound trout in Yellowstone Lake), and the many differences between angling in the park then and now (some park waters were originally barren of fish life, others have had native fish replaced by exotics). Thanks to progressive regulations, Yellowstone fishing is getting better every year, so that the fishing described by these early anglers may again be possible in the park in the future.

Two main forks of the Yellowstone—one heading opposite Wind and Green rivers, and the other opposite Henry's Fork of Snake river, in the same vicinity that the Madison and Gallatin rise—empty into the big lake which has for its outlet the Yellowstone river, and just below the lake the whole river falls over the face of a mountain thousands of feet, the spray rising several hundred. A pebble was timed by a watch in dropping from an overhanging crag of one perpendicular fall, and is said to have required eleven and a half seconds to strike the river below. That beat Niagara Falls all "hollow." The river at these greatest falls is represented to be half as large as the Missouri at Omaha, and as clear as crystal. The great lake, like all others in these mountains, is thick with salmon trout of from five to forty pounds weight, and

Thomas Moran drawing of the Lower Falls of the Yellowstone, 1871.

where the milky boiling mineral waters from the star bolt geysers intermingle with the pure, clear water from the running streams, elegant fish can be forked up by the boat load. A few years more and the U.P. Railroad will bring thousands of pleasure-seekers, sight-seers, and invalids from every part of the globe, to see this land of surpassing wonders.

This is the largest and strangest mountain lake in the world. It being sixty by twenty-five miles in size and surrounded by all manner of large game, including an occasional white buffalo, that is seen to rush down the perpetual snowy peaks that tower above, and plunge up to its sides into the water. It is filled with fish half as large as a man, some of which have a mouth and horns and skin like a catfish and legs like a lizzard. This cross range backs up the waters from the head tributaries of the Yellowstone, and thus the lake is formed; and where the water of the lake breaks over the northern face of this cross ridge, there is a perpendicular fall of fifteen hundred feet over one cliff, which is by far the highest fall of any large river, and considering the surrounding scenery, is the most sublime spot on earth.

Legh Freeman
The Frontier Index, *1867 and 1868*

The Yellowstone trout are peculiar, being the largest variety of the genus caught in waters flowing east. Their numbers are perfectly fabulous, but their appetites extremely dainty. One may fish with the finest tackle of eastern sportsmen, when the water appears to be alive with them, all day long, without a bite. Grasshoppers are their peculiar weakness, and using them for bait, the most awkward angler can fill a champagne basket in an hour or two. They do not bite with the spiteful greediness of eastern brook trout, but amount to much more in the way of subsistence when caught. Their flesh is of a bright yellow color on the inside of the body and of a flavor unsurpassed.

Gustavus Doane
The Yellowstone Expedition of *1870*

Trout Fishing Extraordinary.—It has often been said that it is possible to catch trout in the Yellowstone Lake and cook them in a boiling spring close behind the angler, without taking them off the hook. The assertion seems incredible and it is generally doubted. But this extraordinary feat may certainly be accomplished, not only at the Yellowstone Lake, but also on the Gardiner River, below the Mammoth Hot Springs. The writer performed it at the latter place, in the presence of nine witnesses, at a point not far from a deserted cabin at the foot of the long series of terraces. Selecting a likely pool of the ice-cold stream, with a boiling spring fifteen feet distant from the bank, he stood upon a projecting rock and made a cast. His flies soon tempted a trout to his doom. The fish was small enough to be lifted out of the water without the aid of a landing net, and it was quite easy to drop him into the bubbling hot spring behind. His life must have been extinguished instantly. This procedure was repeated several times, and each of the spectators who had purposely assembled to test the truth of the strange assertion, partook of the fish thus caught and boiled. It required from three to five minutes to thoroughly cook the victims of the experiment, and it was the general verdict that they only needed a little salt to make them quite palatable. This is a "fish story," without doubt, but a perfectly true one. A feat so extraordinary could nowhere else be practiced. It must be chronicled as one of the marvels of the National Park. There are several other places in this land of wonders besides those named where this fishing extraordinary could be successfully attempted.

Henry Winser
The Yellowstone National Park, *1883*

The angler will find good sport in the head-waters of the Yellowstone River and Lake, with a few exceptions; as, for instance, in the Soda Butte Creek, but for that disappointment he is easily compensated by the abundance of fine fish he will find in Trout Lake, near that stream. Almost anywhere on the shore of the Yellowstone Lake where the banks are rocky are good points for angling, and any place where the angler can reach the banks of the Yellowstone River will yield him sport. The angling is especially good at the mouth of the Tower Creek; again, at the mouth of the east fork of Yellowstone River, at the mouth of Blacktail Deer Creek and at the mouth of Gardiner River. All the fish, with the exception of a few sickly ones in the Yellowstone Lake, are fine; and I have known of specimens being caught that weighed ten pounds: this was at Livingston.

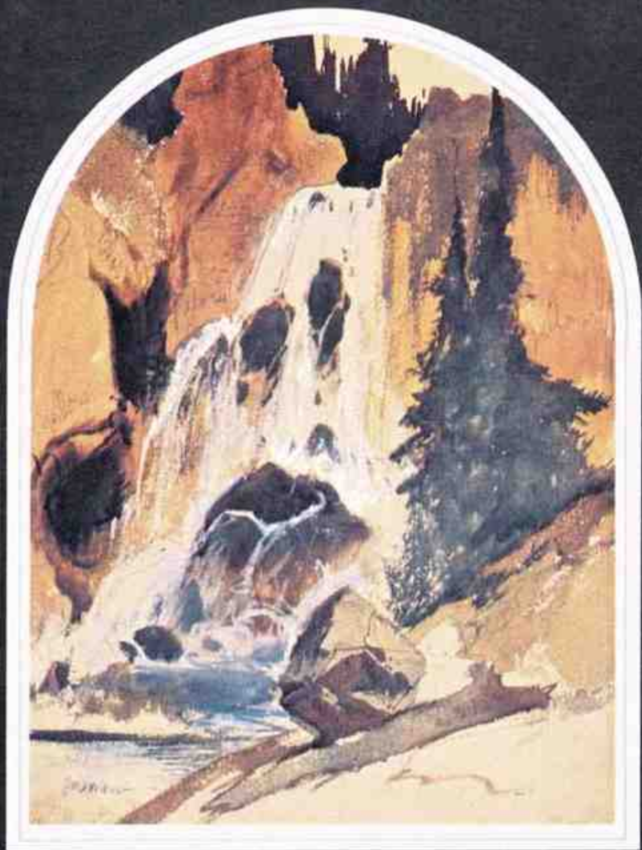
A "Fishing Cone," a hot spring on the shore of Yellowstone Lake wherein early tourists cooked their catch.

No fish will be found in the Gardiner River above its mouth, in the Gibbon River, in the Madison, or Firehole River, nor in the waters or streams of Shooshone Lake.

Herman Haupt
The Yellowstone National Park, *1883*

As we turned our backs upon Old Faithful and his companions that afternoon, and drove down the Firehole river toward the Fountain house, the shadows were just commencing to lengthen. Through the pines, I could catch here and there tantalizing glimpses of the river as it ran along between its meadowy banks. Now and then, it formed rapids which ran into beautiful pools and then out again into long, open riffles. Here, there would be a log extending out into the water, at the end of which I could see a tempting eddy from which I was almost sure I could coax a "big one." Next, there would be a long bend with a riffle above and below it. In those riffles, I could imagine I saw several "beauties" waiting for a fly to drop upon the water that they might jump at it.

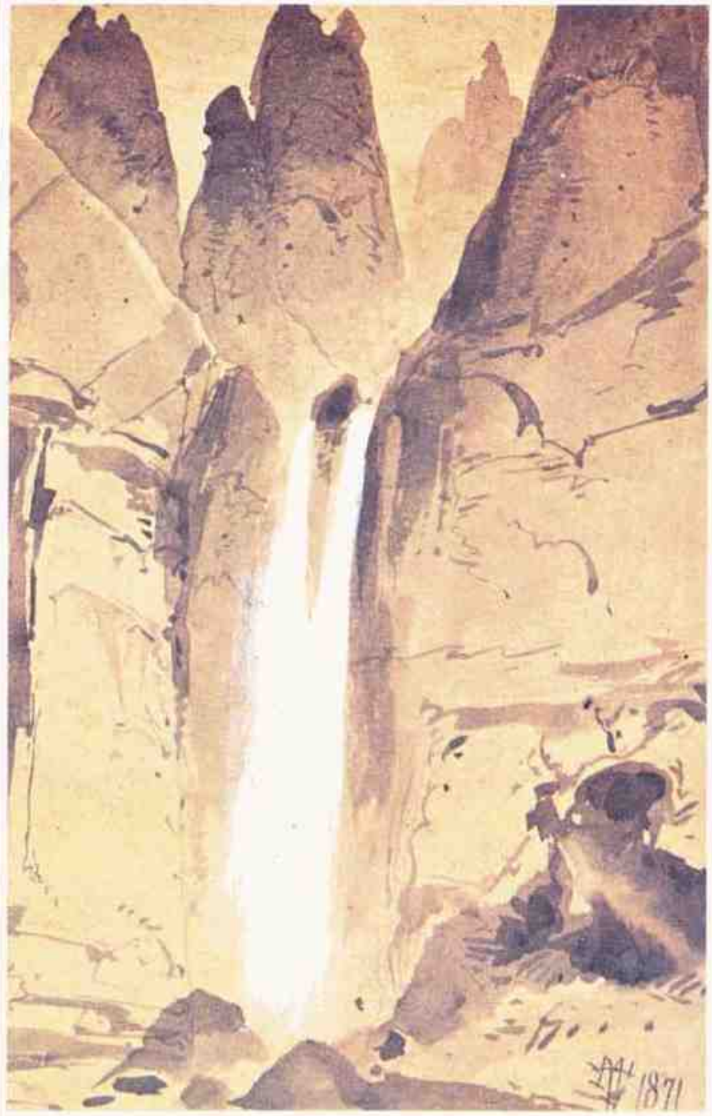
Well, I stood all this just as long as I could. I was going to get out my rod and make a try, even if I failed. My companion was a little, in fact, very sleepy, and did not care whether there were fish or no fish; what he had his mind on was that long, quiet nap he was to have when



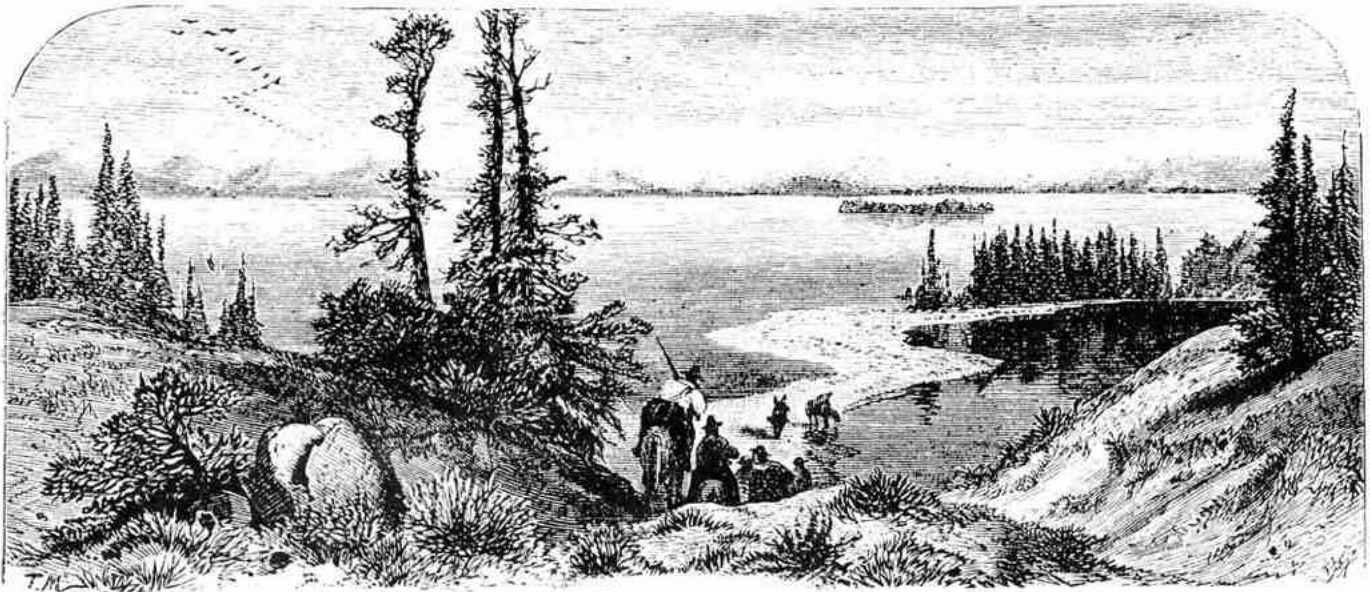
T. Moran.

The Artist's Yellowstone

Thomas Moran, among the foremost western landscape artists of the late nineteenth century, earned his reputation in part by his work in Yellowstone. He accompanied the Hayden Survey party of 1871 during their historic exploration of the Yellowstone area. Most of the accompanying watercolor field sketches were made that year; they formed the basis for a number of finished paintings he later produced in his studio. Some have never been published before, and the rest have had only limited audiences. They are currently on exhibit at the Horace Albright Museum, Yellowstone Park, Wyoming, and appear here through the courtesy of the National Park Service. To the left is Crystal Falls, and below is a view of the Yellowstone region from the north, done near Fort Ellis.



Moran was a fisherman himself; William Henry Jackson photographed him in 1871 with a catch from Tower Creek, which is pictured at the top of the page. Immediately above is a view of "Red Rock" formations in the Grand Canyon of the Yellowstone. To the right is Tower Fall on Tower Creek, and below is one of the hot spring areas on Yellowstone Lake.



he reached the hotel. By promising him that I would only make a few casts, and that he could sleep in the surrey while I tried my luck, he consented to wait just a minute or two. I pulled on some overalls, a fishing-coat, a pair of "gums"; set up my pet rod; tried the reel to see if it still knew its song; ran the line through the guides; tied on a leader; picked a brown hackle, a royal coachman, and a black gnat, out of my book; and sallied down to the river. Before me was a beautiful pool, one of those long, deep ones with just enough current running through it to make the flies work well. On both sides of the river there was a flat, grassy strip about twenty yards wide, and back of this came the pines. I crept up as close to the pool as I dared, took the rod in my right hand, and made a long, pretty cast out past the middle of the pool. The flies had no sooner straightened out than there was a break in the water and a streak of gold and black passed over the end hackle and into the water. He had missed it; but he was a beauty. I felt like letting out an Indian whoop—there was a fish in the river anyway, I had seen him. The next thing to do was to catch him. I was all of a tremble, for if ever I wanted a fish in my life, I wanted that one, if for nothing more than to give me some cause for yelling to my sleepy companion to bring down the landing-net. Once more I drew back and made a long cast, but the flies struck a little too far up stream and had to travel with the current a little distance. No sooner were they over the spot where I had had the first rise than, zip, something struck the end fly and started up stream, making the line hum through the water and the reel spin. I did not think, as some people tell, that I had a whale or an elephant, I knew what it was—it was a good big trout. There is only one thing that acts the way this something on the end of my line did, and that is a gamy trout. He ran up stream until the current and strain of the rod was too much, and then he left the water. You can imagine the way he left the water. You know the way a big trout acts. Well, he acted as they all do. When he was back in the water, he started down stream, and when he reached the end of the pool, he broke again and then came toward me and then away from me. By this time, the first rush was over and I let out a long, deep yell for my sleepy friend. As soon as he heard that yell, he knew just what was up, and he came down that hill with the landing-net in his hand just as fast as a man who was not a bit sleepy. His first words were:—

"What have you got? How big is he?"

After a little sulking, a few dashes, and a break or two, came the fight around the landing-net, and at last I had him kicking in the grass on the bank. He was a beauty! A Loch Leven that measured nearly twenty inches and weighed over two pounds and a half. As he lay there in the grass, his yellow stripe and red spots upon the black made a very pretty picture. He was a beauty, and he was ours.

Thoughts of a nap left the mind of my companion, and fishing was declared the order of the day. He soon had his "Leonard" set up, and before many minutes had a mate to mine bending it almost double. I never saw any one wake up so quickly in my life. He never had a thought of sleep the rest of the afternoon. The fact was, he did not have time for such thoughts, the fish kept him too busy.

From the time I hooked my first fish up to a little while before dark, we had the finest fishing I ever heard of. When I say it was the finest fishing I ever heard of, I mean it, and I have heard some very tall fish stories. We fished almost side by side all afternoon, and one was working with a fish all the time, and part of the time both of us had our hands full. We lost the biggest one we had hooked, of course; one always does. When we left the stream, we had twenty-two fish that would average over two pounds apiece. Some were Rainbows; some were Loch Levens; some were Cutthroats, and they were all beauties, every one of them a work of art. I never hope to catch such a gamy, beautiful mess of trout again. Such fishing one only has once in a lifetime.

Thomas Moran drawing of Yellowstone Lake, 1871.

The next morning, we were up before daylight and at them again, and still they came. The better part of the day, we were shipping the pools and riffles of the Firehole. There would be a lull now and then, when we struck a stretch of still, open water, but most of the time we were working hard with them and bringing to net many a beauty. That afternoon when we drove up to the hotel, we were two tired, happy fishermen. We had had fishing that, even in our wildest hopes, we had never fancied. Those two days will always be bright spots in my memory. When I look back now upon the broad river with its beautiful pools and long, open riffles, upon the pines and the grassy banks, and see those big fellows jumping at my flies and making the line hum through the water and the reel sing, it seems like a beautiful dream to me. I almost believe I have been to the happy hunting grounds.

Yellowstone lake is a beautiful sheet of water with its wooded islands and numerous inlets. It is the largest expanse

of water at such an altitude in the world. It is 7,741 feet above sea level. It reminds one a little of Lake Tahoe, but one misses the beautiful clear blue of the water of that lake. On our trip, we landed at one of the islands and saw some elk and mountain sheep, both most interesting. We reached the Lake hotel at a little after four, and we were soon in a boat with our fishing clothes on, bound for the outlet, where we caught more fish than we wanted. The outlet reached, we anchored our boat in the current, and commenced catching fish on our flies as fast as we could haul them out. We caught two and three at a time, and they all weighed about a pound. In an hour and a half we caught twenty-nine fish that weighed a little over thirty pounds. There were so many fish that there was no great pleasure in catching them; it was all too easy, and we still look back upon the fishing in the Firehole as the best fishing we ever had.

Frank King
The Overland Monthly, *1897*

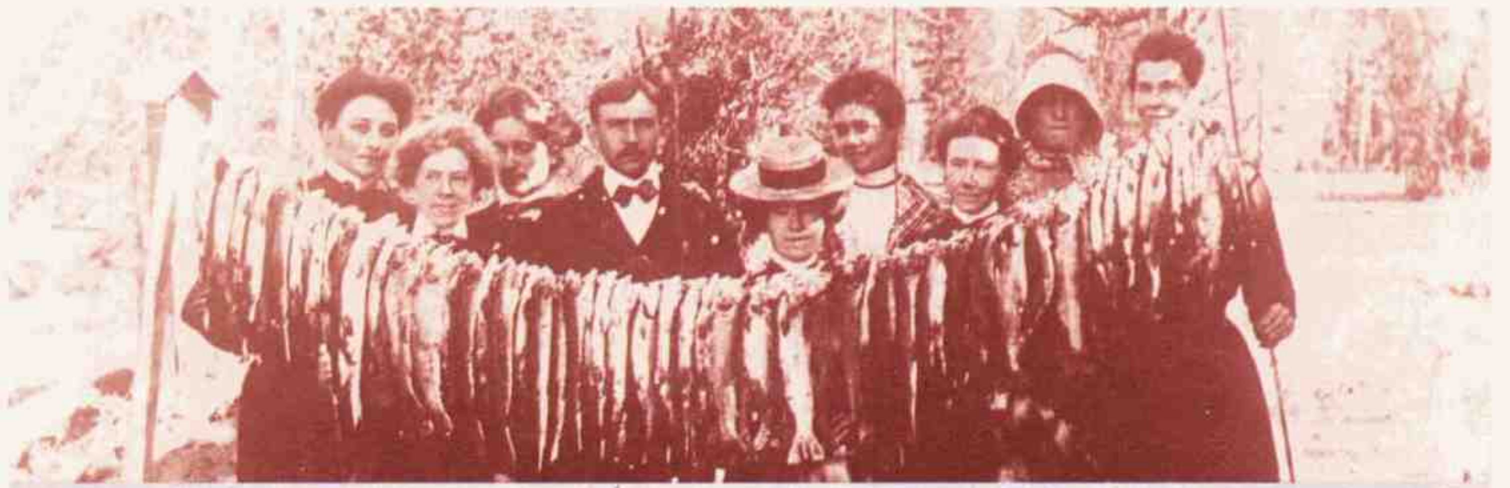
If you outfit at Cody, you will have a fine road into the Park over Sylvan Pass. Along the Stinkingwater River you will get excellent trout fishing. Maybe this river will be roily and turbid; if so, do not be discouraged because the fish do not rise to the fly. They are there but are too well fed by the rich natural food torn from the shores and floating on the tops of the waters. Try the little brooks which run into the Stinkingwater; most of these are swift and cold and generally clear; a sudden rain may roil them for a few hours, but soon you will be able to see the pebbles on the bottom and the fish darting to and fro. Where these little brooks turn sharply in their flight down the mountains, there you will likely find deep pools of darkish waters and probably an eddy covered with brown foam. In such a pool there is sure to be a trout, and he is after food. Put on for a trial, a Coachman as head fly, then a Sethgreen in the middle, and as trailer use a Gray Hackle. Sizes Nos. 10 and 12 are probably best for these little brooks. If you have any luck, you will catch a mess in a few hours by following up the brooks. If you are an Eastern trout fisherman, you will examine these fish with an eager interest, for they will be new to you. They are the cut-throat trout of the family *Salmo Clarkii,* so like the Eastern brook trout in their general habits and appearance, but so unlike in their markings. I have often tempted these Western trout with Eastern flies and cast over them the beautiful Parmachene Belle, Professor, Montreal and other red and highly colored varieties which are so successful in the waters of Maine and Michigan, but with them my success in the West has been very limited. The dark, silver and gray trout of the West seem to favor flies more in harmony with their own colorings – the Gray-hackle, Brown-hackle, Coachman, Grizzly-king, Sethgreen, Black-gnat and White-moth. Of course the weather and season also must be considered in determining the fly to be used; but after all is said and done, I believe the Indian's way of finding out what the fish is feeding on is the best. "Catch him any way you can and cut him open and look."

Ralph E. Clark
Outing, *1908*

One beautiful evening in June I was fishing along the Gibbon River for rainbow trout from a place where there were waist-high bushes along the bank. I had been exasperated by my own ill luck and so when I got a good rise I struck viciously as it looked like a heavy fish. Of course, since I had expected to hook a large fish, I was greatly surprised to see my hook leave the water with an insignificant little troutlet attached to it. The trout shot up over my shoulder in a beautiful arc and descended into—the wide-open mouth of an enormous black bear that had stolen silently up and was standing in the low willows twenty-five feet behind me. I feel confident that he was merely curiously watching me and what I was doing; but seeing the fish coming his way, concluded he might as well gather it in. Fortunately my trout left the hook just before it reached the bear, otherwise my catch might have been larger! And I surely was not equipped to tackle a fish of that size.

Milton Skinner
Bears in the Yellowstone, *1925*

Fishing Bridge, across the outlet of Yellowstone Lake, in the 1920's. Fishing is now prohibited from the bridge to protect spawning fish and to permit public viewing of this spectacular natural fish population.



Franz Pott: Western Original

by George Grant

Although for many years I was engaged in professional fly-tying in direct competition with Franz B. Pott of Missoula, Montana, I came to admire him and his work very much. I know that he took great pride in his flies, and that he maintained an excellence of uniformity and quality over his many years of tying. It has been said that he wove all his own hackles, either because he did not want the process known to others, or because he regarded the hackle as being the most important part of the fly and he wanted it done right.

Pott was originally a barber and a wigmaker, and he used his knowledge of the latter profession to conceive the woven-hair hackle, the one factor that sets his flies apart from all similar imitations, of which there have been more than a few. When he first tied his woven hair hackles some fifty years ago I do not believe he was primarily interested in the superiority of hair over feather as a hackle material. It is my opinion that because he was formerly a wig-maker he merely applied his knowledge of hair weaving to the making of hackles and found it to be an excellent way to attach hair to a hook shank. The success of the flies so tied, however, has caused others to speculate as to the reasons why they were so effective.

I have always believed that the stiff hairs used and the method of applying them to the hook shank was the reason for their immediate outstanding acceptance when first made available to the angling public, as well as their continued success to this day. One must understand that western rivers contain a considerable volume of water, even in late season, and that they descend from altitudes of 8,000 to 2,500 feet in a precipitous manner. Because of the velocity fishing is invariably done by wading downstream and casting a long line across, resulting in a certain amount of constant pressure being exerted on the hackle of a fly even when it is fished in the preferred "dead drift" style. When the hackle is of the woven variety and the hair is coarse and stiff, like badger or ox-ear, it is able to resist the influence of the water flow, remain extended in a lifelike attitude, and, equally important, does not conceal the body of the fly.

Many knowledgeable fly-fishermen, observing these flies for the first time, are skeptical because of the obvious lack of mobility in the hackle. It should be emphasized that stiff hair hackle filaments do not derive their effectiveness from the movement of individual fibres, as is the case with grouse or partridge, but when coarse hair is applied to the hook through the medium of a woven hackle, it presents a sparse, live, insect-like appearance that does not alter materially when fished in fast or slow water.

Others will summarily reject them on the premise that such stiff hackles would either repel the strike or would cause the trout to reject the fly on contact before an effective strike could be made. This objection becomes invalid when it is considered that the mountain whitefish, a western trout-stream inhabitant with a small mouth, is readily taken on stiff-hackled hair flies.

It is understandable that such flies might not be acceptable to all fly-fishermen, and in the early 1920's when Franz Pott first introduced his woven hair flies, this may have caused him some concern. Their instant popularity and the fact that demand has continued over a period in excess of fifty years would seem to bear adequate testimony as to their effectiveness.

Another outstanding feature of the Pott flies was and is the woven-hair body. It is composed of the same kinds of hair that is used to weave hackles with a narrow, contrasting-color thread stripe woven laterally on the underside. The primary purpose of this stripe is to strengthen the hair body and prevent it from unraveling drastically when bitten through by fish. It serves the secondary purpose of adding color, usually orange, and carries out the concept that most nymphs have lighter-colored bellies than backs.

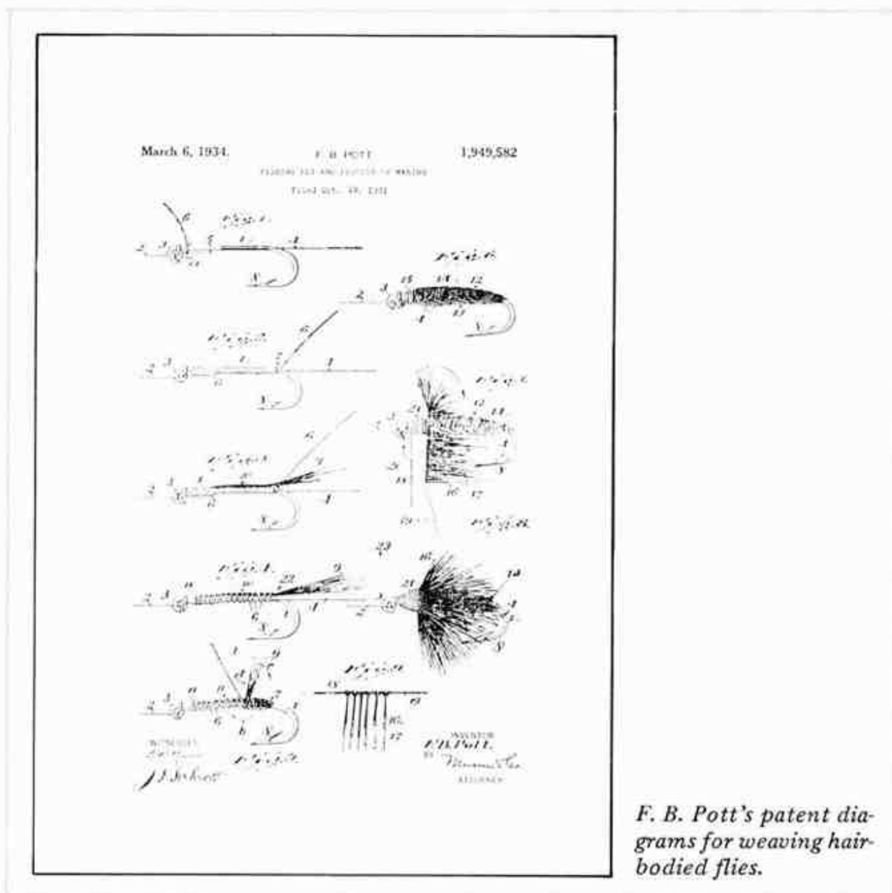
The woven-hair body was claimed by many. Bill Beaty, one of Montana's first professional fly-tyers, told me he was making similar bodies several years before the appearance of the Pott flies in the early 1920's. A Missoula tyer, whose name I cannot recall, kept up a running battle with Pott for many years, asserting that he had originated the flies and that Pott had appropriated them, merely adding the woven hackle. There were few, if any, even in those early days, who actually knew the truth, and I feel sure that there are none today. There was actually never any point to the controversy as Pott patented both the method of making the body, and the process of combining the body and the woven hackle to make the complete fly in his Patent # 1,949,582 (1934). His first Patent # 1,523,895 (1925) dealt principally with the woven "rock worm" type body, although the woven hackle was mentioned.

As a fly-tyer, I would have to say that if a man was to design a fly body to be used specifically with a woven-hair hackle it would be better to design one that did not result in so much bulk at

George Grant tied this selection of Pott woven-hair flies for presentation to the Museum and to illustrate this article. The tying-style of these flies is, as the article explains, quite unusual, and since we are not inclined to publish extensive "how-to-do-it" features we recommend interested readers to George's books for more details on technique. The unusual construction of the flies does pose some interesting challenges for photography, since a key feature of the fly is underbelly weaving. For that reason we have shown two of the flies from underneath, and presented the entire selection from the side. The flies are as follows, from left to right, starting from the top.

First row: inset underview of a Maggot, Badger Peacock, Black Ant, inset view of a Buddy Mite. Second row: Cliff Special, Royal Coachman, Sandy Ant, Badger Yellow. Third row: Mr. Mite (brown body, orange belly), Black Jack (black body, yellow belly), B.T. Special, Maggot. Fourth row: Fibber Yellow, Sandy Mite (tan body, orange belly), Dark Rockworm, Dina Mite (orange belly, black hackle). Fifth row: Light Rockworm, Fizzle (peacock body, yellow belly), Lady Mite (orange belly, badger hackle), Buddy Mite.

The Museum also has on exhibit many of George's own flies, including two series of stonefly nymphs he recently presented to the Museum and a large framed set of various patterns that are part of the Federation of Fly Fishermen Collection exhibit. Though it is easy to appreciate George's conceptual debt to F.B. Pott, even a brief glance at George's own work will convince anyone that his own craftmanship is a major step beyond earlier work.



F. B. Pott's patent diagrams for weaving hair-bodied flies.

the tie-off point as does the "mite" body. The original bodies were tied much fuller than they are today, and, when the coarse hair was tied down at the shoulder, it resulted in a rather unstable base on which to seat the woven hackle. If the body turned on the hook shank it tended to loosen the hackle.

On the other hand, it must always be remembered that Pott was a wig-maker, a man skilled in the weaving of hair, and it would be more than likely that a person with such talent would be the one who would first devise a woven-hair body. This theory is further strengthened by the fact that he devised and patented the woven-hair body of the original "rock worm" pattern. If I had to cast my vote as to who originated the woven-hair body it would have to go to Franz Pott.

Pott not only knew how to make flies that were effective in the catching of trout, but he had an uncanny knack of giving them names that were easy for anglers to learn and to remember. There is every indication to lead one to believe that he was not concerned with the theory of imitation except in a general way, but everything he produced had a "buggy" look that appealed to both fish and fishermen. He used such names as "Sandy Mite," "Lady Mite," "Mr. Mite," etc., and I believe that this nomenclature was derived from the word "hellgrammite," western vernacular for all large species of the stonefly nymph.

The "mite" flies came upon the scene at a most propitious time. The rivers of western Montana were teeming with unsophisticated wild trout and western trout fishermen were just becoming aware of the incomparable thrill and satisfaction that accompanied the catching of trout with an artificial fly. Any fly would take trout on occasion, but it soon became apparent that none were so consistently productive as Pott's patterns. Any successful fly must have inherent fish-deceiving quality to begin with, but it is a recognized fact that the more it is used the more its reputation is enhanced, and, as a result, a legend is created that endures and grows. There is a difference, however, between a legend and a fable.

Despite the fact that these flies had some structural defects (and what fly does not?), they were so effective that few fishermen ever noticed. In fact, when the bodies became rough and ragged their effectiveness seemed to increase, and, if the hackle merely loosened and did not come off, the flies would take fish until there was so little left that only the color of the hair furnished a clue as to the pattern. It is a rare fisherman, indeed, who would complain when the destruction of a fly is caused by the teeth of many fine trout.

During the 1940's Pott leased his business to a Denver firm with the proviso that the quality of the flies must stay high or the lease would be abrogated. The fact that he later re-assumed operation of the business at Missoula would seem to indicate that he was not satisfied with the new commercial product. This, of course, is an unconfirmed story that may have no basis in fact, but it is so typical of the man in question that it is not difficult to believe.

Pott, too, was a man of integrity. For many years the price of his flies at retail was standardized at 35¢ each, or three for $1.00, and he would not permit them to be sold for less, even though this was in an era when his prices were considered unduly high by many who used them. When a retail firm in Spokane openly violated his price he trapped the supplying wholesaler by weaving one red hair in the hackle of each fly shipped to him. When these flies appeared in the Spokane store he knew where they came from, and the wholesaler lost his source.

This unusual man came on the fly-tying scene quietly and unobtrusively in the early 1920's, worked industriously and successfully for several decades, and departed unceremoniously. Trying to research lesser known phases of his life is like trying to put a wisp of smoke in a bottle. Close relatives and intimate friends seem to have vanished with him. He lived in an era during which a great economic depression dragged on interminably, finally to be interrupted by an equally devastating world war. Recording the history or accomplishments of a fly-tyer in such times was not considered important, and I consider this to be regrettable. Despite the ingenuity, practicality, and great regional success of his flies, the late Franz B. Pott remains in comparative obscurity in the world of fly-tying.

I firmly believe that the Pott hand-woven hair hackle was one of the most important contributions to the construction of artificial trout flies for western big-river fly fishing that has occurred in the past half century, and that its full potential is yet to be realized. Many flies, like the well-known "Muddler Minnow," that have sky-rocketed to world-wide fame, will probably never equal the all-around fish-getting qualities of Pott's "Sandy Mite" as far as Montana waters are concerned.

I would suggest that The Museum of American Fly Fishing reserve a hallowed space in memory of this great fly-tyer, and embark upon a concentrated effort to gather and preserve as much of his past, both material and historical, as may be possible. I would be pleased to volunteer my services and the results of my continuing research.

Umpqua Steelhead

by Major Lawrence Mott

Wherever the crowd goes — the crowd goes! Thus it is that the Eel—in Northern California—the Klamath, the Rogue, the Mackenzie, and other Oregon streams are heavily overstocked with anglers each summer, while a gorgeous river that, to my mind, has not an equal for charm of exquisite scenery; that has never been (and that *is* not) overfished; and one on which I had the finest sport with the great steelhead, in all my years of fishing experiences . . . thus it is that the North Umpqua goes, so-to-speak, a'begging!

The mob always HAS gone to the other rivers! Hence it always goes to them! It deliberately shuttles to and fro, at terrific speed, over the magnificent Highway Bridge at Winchester, that crosses the North Umpqua some 5 miles from the bustling little city of Roseburg, county seat of Douglas—with barely a passing glance at the stream!

In '28 I had the great pleasure of spending several weeks on the far-famed Rogue. And most excellent sport did I have! But . . . I did not fish it during those that I call the "mob" and "dub" months—July and August—and for the reason that one is constantly unwrapping some *other* angler's line from one's neck—cutting someone *else's* fly from the seat of one's breeches, and so forth, during those months. No—I had my sport on the very roguish Rogue in late October and well in to November, when the nights were tinged with frost and the mountains' foliage was a bewildering kaleidoscopic mass of brilliant colors, and—when there *were no anglers!*

Oh, yes! Steelhead not only take a fly avidly as late as that, but even later, still!

July, August and September are the months—*par excellence*—for the upper waters of the North Umpqua. It is not a "late river"—like the Rogue.

Let me, in the first place, assure my readers that the North Umpqua is the ONLY unspoiled river that is left on the whole of the American Pacific slope! That this statement may—at first glance—seem a bit broad and untrammelled, I admit. But it is a true one—nae'the'less! As I have previously mentioned, all the other streams are too thickly "populated" during the summer months to enable one to fish with any degree of comfort and satisfaction. A certain famous authority of the Rogue, and one who is domiciled at Grant's Pass, wrote to me while I was on the Upper Umpqua. . . . "Stay where you are. The sport that you are having beats ours all hollow. Few fish this year and an angler on every rock!"

The Upper Umpqua is decidedly hard to get at. There is no denying this. And by "hard" I mean that the way in to the back country, from Roseburg, is—for the greater part of it—a Forest Service dirt road—with an almost incredible number of sharp turns and twistings—and steep gradients. A "road," in short, that requires the driver's constant alertness and care. It is, however, entirely practical. A small number of cars penetrated to its end—at Steamboat Landing—last summer, when I was there. Their drivers heaved sighs of relief on arriving—but

they had made it, which was the important thing!

Another deterrent to the "mob" influx is the fact that nothing—save a few minor groceries at a wee place called Glide—may be purchased, after Roseburg is left astern. There are but two "resorts" over the entire 60 miles. Camping grounds, and very fine ones, are maintained by the Forest Service, but these are—as yet—few and far between. Hence it may be said that the angler who strikes in for the Upper North Umpqua must be self-contained in his car—as to all equipment and supplies.

Having drawn a rather sketchy picture of the reasons why the lovely river is not generally known, I turn to the more pleasing side—the side that will delight the REAL angler! The man who does not mind being a bit physically uncomfortable and thrown on his own resources—more or less—!

Mile after mile of enchanting pools, riffles and deep runs is a description of the river—in a few words. Rising from Diamond Lake, it literally hurls its tortuous and—in places—wickedly wild way to the sea. Only once has it been achieved from near the Lake, to salt water, in a specially-built bateau-like craft. But the men that accomplished the feat vowed ... "never again!" It was a most beautiful trip—scenically—for I know of no river that has even a tithe of the abounding and ever-changing charms of forest and stream and mountains' pictures. But it was *hard work!* Most of the rapids cannot be "run," and their little craft had to be "lined" over them. I have done a great deal of this sort of thing on Labrador rivers that had never had a canoe on their surfaces, and I know that a day of "lining" will take the starch entirely out of the huskiest of muscles.

And Nature has further protected her North Umpqua from the "mob" by thrusting her forest, in most places, right down to the water's edge, making it imperative that an angler who would do well, be thoroughly versed in two things: 1. The ability to wade deep in the swift current. And—2.—The ability to cast a long line.

Would you like to have an hour or so, with me, on some pet water o'mine?

I am a firm believer in the early morning and late afternoon fishing—never going on the stream between 10 A.M. and 5 P.M. The all-day thrash-thrash-thrash of so many tyros gets them — day-in-and-out — practically nothing save, perhaps, some very small trout, and it succeeds—admirably—in disturbing the pools and making the larger fish restless and exceedingly wary.

So it is that you and I step from our tents soon after the Eastern skies have been delicately touched with the brushes of the Master Artist, and are aglow with the delicate roseate, gray-purple and orange tints of another day. A quick break-our-fast of yesterday-caught steelhead—broiled—with a bit o' bacon across it; buttered toast and excellent coffee—and we are ready.

It is but a dozen strides to the poolside, at the upper end of it. The mad dashing of the rapid above has slowed and deepened into a most heavenly run where I know, by happy experience, that the big steelheads inhabiting this river love to lie.

"What is it to be in the way of a fly, this morning? Subdued light because of a high fog that dams the downpouring of the sun's rays. S'ppose we try a Jock Scott, No. 6?"

What more all-satisfying feeling is there—*soul*-satisfying, is the better way of putting it—than to wade out in the stream, that seems to rub caressingly against your legs—early o' a lovely morn' —a morn' whose utter peace in the wilderness is as a breath of the Divinity!

And now with the 8 oz. rod gracefully sending out line as I take it from the reel—I begin to reach out for a particular eddy—a very particular eddy, indeed, behind a huge, sunken rock against which the stream has stormed in vain for years. And—if—I—can ... put my—fly—just ... over—*there* ... AH! Did you see him? He came for it beautifully! I'll rest him a few minutes while I have a smoke ... now then:—watch closely ... when the fly draws 'round—*got him!*

As a piece of molten silver the great steelhead flings itself clear of the surface ... "A 7-pounder, if he's an ounce!"

The pool is dotted with lone rocks, and if your fish crosses above one and passes to the far side of it—it's a toss up whether you can save him as the weight of water carries your line against the rock and grimly holds it there. There is one hope ... if he will pop out NOW ... I can lift the line clear! He jumps—beautifully—I had the tip as high as I could reach—the line cleared, thank the Lord ... and off we go downstream—steelhead and I! Hurry up—if you are going to follow—for divvil a bit is he stopping—at all, at all! Down and down—until halfway down the stretch he checks in comparatively quiet water. Now we'll go after him—hard!

The steady punishment inflicted by the marvelous backbone of so slight a rod (for steelhead) is beginning to tell ... he has jumped eight times—doubt if there is another left in him—but he has plenty of cunning as to the how of setting his body at such an angle with the current that a terrific strain is brought on the little, tapered leader ... I'd best ease up a bit and let him slip down in to still more quiet waters ... *what the deuce?*—FOULED! Pressure only brings that "dead" reply along the line, that every angler knows, only too well. There is but one thing to do—as wading out is impossible—and I do it—slack away everything until the bight of the line is bowing with the stream.

Eureka! He's cleared it, himself!

(As a friendly tip to them that, perhaps, are unaware of it: six, perhaps seven times out of ten—especially with steelhead—where conditions are such that you cannot get out to clear, a sudden change in the angle of strain on the fish's mouth caused by the slacking of the line as I have described, will cause the fish to shift its position, the line clearing—as was the result in the present case.)

The steelhead swings wide across the river and gets into a partial eddy; ... it will not do to let him rest in yon' comfortable spot, so I bring more pressure to bear. This annoys him into two more jumps, but there is not the "old pepper" in evidence. Loath as he is to come, I persuade him back in the current—always keeping below him, thus having the advantage of the river's strength with me. Gradually, then more rapidly, I "work" the fish back to my side of the stream. He catches a glimpse of me and surges away, but it is only a gesture and on the next leading-in I swing him broadside to me, quite finished. A carefully-timed gaff stroke and he is at our feet—barely a quiver left.

"What will he go?"

"My guess is six and a half—but the little scales say a full *seven!*" There he is—a thing of beauty and a joy forever!

Though many years have passed into the discard since I began to shoot and fish, I never cease to respectfully marvel at the handiwork of the Master Craftsman. And I know of no fish whose sheer loveliness of delicate hues and shadings surpass those of the famous Steelhead. The name comes from the copp'rous tints along the sides of the head—metallic and beautiful. Dark-blue black, shading into a pearl gray and merging into snow white on the belly, he lies on the dark-green of the ferns—a magnificent thing!

S'ppose that we drop downstream and try the head of that deep riffle, over there—just where the water gathers speed for the next rapid ... a beautiful spot, indeed! But to cover it properly takes a right long cast, and deep wading.

The rocks of the North Umpqua are particularly slippery, and almost all of the rounded variety. Hobs are worse than nothing. The only kind of a wading shoe that will do the work of keeping one upright are those with *heavy felt* soles. To further assist in maintaining my equilibrium I designed a combination gaff and wading staff, something like those that I have used on Scotch and Labrador

rivers. The staff is shod in light steel, for a matter of 2 feet, with blunt point. This equipment I have found to be an invaluable adjunct for the tough wading of the fast-water streams of Oregon and Washington. When not in use there is an eye on the shaft that drops easily over a hook that is on a light strap carried across the shoulders. A push shoves it across one's back, when casting, and out of the way.

S'ppose *you* fish this run?

It is so bright now that I suggest a Black Dose, or a Brown Fairy, No. 8. And we'll go up to that point. You must wade out along the ledge, but don't bear down stream as there is a drop-off that is over your head, on the lower side. You will have to go to your waist as it is a long cast to THE . . . spot. See where the current sweeps in reverse—forming the main eddy? Try to put your fly just at its edge . . . that's it! Just a bit higher—if you can? . . . Fine! . . . Nothing doing? *He* wanted it! Sowie! . . . let him go, man—*let him go!* 'Scuse my yelling orders—but you have never tackled one of these fish in this kind of water and they can make a monkey out of angler in 1-2-3 order, if you don't know 'em! *Hold your rod up!* Daggone it—if he should jump, with your tip pointed at him in that way—something would break, or the fly tear out! That's better! Yon's a grand fish, my son! . . . SOME jump! He'll do better than 7 lbs. . . . watch him . . . *watch him*—snub him hard if he makes for that dead water—it's full of snags . . . B'gosh, he beat you to it! . . . Fouled? *Darn!* Keep a taut line—I'll wade out and see if I can clear . . ."

Brrrrrrr! Tho' 'tis August, the crystal waters of the North Umpqua are always COLD! I never wear waders, as they are too infernally hot, clumsy and decidedly dangerous. I gingerly pick my way over the moss-slippery rocks . . . the surface of the back water is almost calm. . . . I follow the line down with my eyes and can see the steelhead . . . the line has almost a half-turn 'round the end of a log . . . the fly seems secure in the upper jaw—nothing for it but to dip under, as I cannot reach, standing up.

"Stand by—I'm going down!" The water gurgles in my ears as it closes over my head—Lordy, it's cold! I move slowly so as not to startle the big fish into a frantic lunge that might result in a tear-out. I can see almost as plainly as in the air—carefully I reach out—the fish is hugely enlarged and looks like a silver torpedo — I clear the line — bob up—"Heave away!"

But a shaft o' light is on its way down stream—reel screaming joyously—and you make the best time possible after—while I wring my shirt—my eyes following you—that makes the eighth jump! A grand fighter! Glorious is the sunlight! The play of lights and shadows along the stream-side is exquisite. A westerly breeze daintily caresses your face, and gracefully sways the tall grasses to and fro. A dab of blue-and-white flashes by—scolding harshly. The kingfisher wonders who-in-Heck is poaching on his domain! (There should be a bounty on these marauders, as they are the greatest destroyers of game fish fry, extant!) A pine grouse *"Ooomp's"* from somewhere in the thickets, and the riveters-blows of a woodpecker come sharply . . . truly—great and wonderful Hands have fashioned these things—for Man's benefit and enjoyment!

"Got him stopped?"

most useful on both the Rogue and the Umpqua—and there is a particularly alluring bit of water just below us and right in the middle of the run. 'Tis only a few feet across—a semi-quiet resting place for up-coming fish, caused by two big rocks—but I have oft' found big fish lying in it, and always fly-eager. A bit o' a trick to work it, as unless your fly sweeps across it—*fast*—it does not seem to be of any interest to the fish. I wade out to the proper position—make a false cast or two—and drop the fly where I want it. Nothing happens on the first try—nor on the second. I lengthen out a few feet o' line . . . the Durham Ranger

I sit me down on a big rock—to thoroughly enjoy *your* pleasure—and perhaps I may mention, as a sort of philosophical aside, that I derive far more enjoyment in watching a friend's fun-having than I do in handling the rod, myself.

"Nay—nay! He's not ready to come ashore—yet!"

Up stream—and across it—he goes. *Zzzzz—Zzzzzz*—from the line as the strong current saws at it—the fish turns suddenly—"Get goin' on that reel, my son!"

Frantically you reel . . . the steelhead swings in almost to your feet—a gorgeous picture! No way in which to lead him ashore for beaching as there are too many reefs and snags . . . so a gaff stroke writes *finis* to that thrill-ful fight.

"Like steelheadin'—do you?"

My readers . . . make reply in your own words. 7¾ lbs. is your first fish.

But the next event on the morning's bill of entertainment is, by all odds, the main go!

While you are having a rest I take the rod and change the fly to a No. 6 Durham Ranger—a Scotch fly that I have found

fairly skitters across the foot of the "hole" . . . I did not see him take it—but the vicious lunge nearly pulled me from my precarious balance—and the steelhead was off, down river . . . Lord! look at that fish go! . . . all the casting line is gone and much of the linen back line . . . *still* he tears on—I doing my best to follow. . . . I made a mis-step in the hurry — WHOOSH! Down I go — full length, but I hang on to the rod! By the time that I have picked myself up the fish is all of 100 yards below me—and in quiet, deep water. *How* I managed to get down there without the line fouling is an epic! My antics and cavortings must have been funny, as my almost 200 *avoirdupois* leaped agilely (?) across the deep places, teetered on rocks—and so forth! But I got there, and my fish was still with me! For a bit he was prone to sulk and I knew that I had a big 'un. Then he jumped! I studied my battle ground carefully, noting the vantage points. For some ten minutes we nip-and-tucked it to and fro—rounds being about equal. The big fish was some 40 feet from me, on the edge of the white water. He jumped again—*and I saw the fly leave its mouth*

while in the air! You all know that "nasty" feeling . . . and it always seems to happen with the "biggest" fish of the day—too!

BUT . . . the discarded fly had no more than hit the water when there was a terrific splash and I was hung to another fish! It jumped—*pronto*—and it was as large as the one that I had just lost! The complete reversal of my feelings caused a mental confusion, for a moment. Before I could pull myself together my fresh antagonist was out of the pool and headed for the 120-mile distant sea—at a nothing-flat rate. Pickin' up my feet . . . off I staggered—after him—on a stern chase once more. Snubbing hard, I checked him at the top of the next falls, as there was *no* hope of staying connected with a fish in that place—a mass of sharp ledges and out-cropping boulders.

Sullenly—grudgingly he came back. Then he suddenly flung himself into "high" and deliberately forged up against the rapid—back to the precise spot where he had taken the fly. It is rare, indeed, that a fish will thus run up stream, for obvious reasons. So it was a decided novelty for me to have to clamber over rocks in that direction.

But the strain of the effort told heavily on the fish. Two more slithering jumps—a tentative swing down stream, from which I checked him—and the beaching.

A LOVELY steelhead of 9¾ lbs.!

Gad, man—did you ever see anything so wholly beautiful? Now then—take a quick look, as the little fly in the tough part of the upper jaw has done no harm and this chap goes back to his freedom . . . there you are, old timer! Good luck and thanks for a splendid tussle!

The great fish moves sluggishly in the quiet at the bank side—as tho' wondering just what had happened. Then, guided by his marvellous instinct, he moves toward the quick water—a flash—and he is gone under the foam!

GREAT . . . was it not?

This article first appeared in July, 1930, in Forest and Stream. *This was, in fact, the final issue of that magazine. Its mailing list was taken over by* Field and Stream, *the current editor of which was kind enough to give us reprint permission.*

Major Lawrence Mott, one of the great early anglers of the North Umpqua River, is shown here with a large Chinook salmon from the same river. Picture courtesy of Jim Van Loan, the Steamboat Inn, Oregon.

"Englishmen in Colorado: Fishing for Breakfast," from the London **Graphic**, *1872.*

Gunnison Trout

Trout fishing in most parts of the west was almost always excellent when first discovered by sportsmen. We are so accustomed to hearing about the decline of wild fisheries that it's a refreshing change to hear about one that probably got better. By the 1890's, rainbow trout brought from California were making the Gunnison River nationally famous. The following article appeared in **American Field** *in September of 1894. The author used a pen-name, "Calumet."*

Notice the mention of the Denver & Rio Grande Railroad. As in earlier times, railroad companies were among the most energetic promoters of outdoor sport. In 1910 this same railroad had a standing offer of a twenty dollar gold piece for any fly fisherman who caught a rainbow weighing ten or more pounds, and according to the **Transactions of the American Fisheries Society** *for 1910, the reward was paid "about twice a year." The same report said that the largest fish were caught from the Gunnison River.*

I have just returned from a sojourn of about three weeks' fishing and hunting, on the Gunnison River, about fifteen miles below the town of Gunnison. During my stay there some of the largest trout were caught that have ever been taken out of any river in the state. One rainbow trout was caught by Mayor Shove, of Gunnison, that weighed something over ten pounds when taken out of the water. It was taken with an Orvis No. 6 coachman fly on a seven-ounce rod.

A day or two afterward Mr. H. M. Bostwick, of this city, caught a trout which weighed eight and three-fourths pounds. This was also a rainbow trout and was taken with the same kind of fly, upon a Leonard seven-ounce rod. Mr. Bostwick played this trout about twenty minutes before landing it, and after the contest was finished anyone would have found it difficult to say which was most exhausted — the fisherman or the fish. The same day Mr. Bostwick caught another trout of the same variety which weighed five and a half pounds, and his companion, Mr. Clawson, caught three which exceeded in weight three and one-half pounds each, the five fishes aggregating a total of twenty-four and one-half pounds. This is a very high average.

A few days thereafter Mr. Clawson landed another fish, which weighed close upon six pounds; it was also of the rainbow variety and was taken with a seven and a half ounce Leonard rod and a No. 14 midget or brown gnat hook. This last was quite remarkable as the landing of so large a fish upon so small a hook was quite a feat, and demanded great angling skill.

I believe that these rainbow trout are not indigenous to the Gunnison River, they having been introduced from California; but their adopted river is evidently a very favorable stream for them as is indicated by their great size. It is predicted that in the course of two or three years trout will be caught in the Gunnison River which will weigh as much as fifteen pounds. It is reported that one which exceeded twelve pounds in weight was found wedged in a tie-jam, but I have no authentic data upon which to base this statement, so simply give it for what it is worth. The other fishes I have seen, and for them I can vouch. The rainbow trout are very gamy and make a strong fight, much more so than the native trout, which are rather sluggish.

The stretch of water from which these trout were taken is under the supervision of the Denver Fishing Club, the headquarters of which are at Iola Station, on the Denver & Rio Grande Railroad. It is directly in the center of about ten miles of the best water on the whole river, and furnishes a variety of meadow and canon fishing which I do not believe is excelled anywhere in this state. The river at this point is simply alive with fishes, but the trout themselves are very expert and it requires most delicate tackle and careful manipulation on the part of the angler to secure any good results. This stretch is certainly no place for the novice with unsuitable outfit, as the fishes are very discriminating and most particular about the manner in which they will be caught.

The feed is very abundant on the Gunnison River, and as a general thing the trout are not hungry. I have frequently fished in a pool in which trout were jumping all about my flies, and have been unable to secure a single strike. Such treatment is exceedingly aggravating, to say the least. In such cases I am unable to determine whether they are simply playing, or whether they see the leader attached to the fly and hence avoid it; possibly some readers of the *American Field* **may be able to advance an opinion upon this point.**

Glacier Trails

by W. W. Crosby

The country that is now Glacier National Park, in northern Montana, was one of the last scenic "wonderlands" of the west to be brought to national prominence. Sportsman-conservationist George Bird Grinnell (co-founder of the Boone and Crockett Club and longtime editor of Forest and Stream*) deserves much of the credit for the preservation of this area, which became a national park in 1910. The following account of the fishing there appeared in* Some Western Fishing, *published by W. W. Crosby in 1926. He discusses only a few of the park's many waters, and struggles to keep to the subject, from which the scenery is continually distracting him. Perhaps the reader will better appreciate the complex topography of the area if we explain that the waters of Glacier Park flow in their various parts to both the Atlantic and the Pacific, and still have some left over to send up to Hudson Bay.*

I have fished for trout along the streams of the French slope of the Pyrennees; in the Alps; in beautiful Lorraine; in England, Scotland and Ireland, amid surroundings both historic and poetically beautiful like Killarney; in Maine and other parts of New England and elsewhere in the eastern part of the United States; in New Brunswick; and in the Canadian Rockies—but never have I enjoyed trout-fishing as in Glacier National Park.

While the heights of the peaks in Glacier National Park are not as great as in some of the other localities, and while the extent of the Park is relatively limited, nevertheless the mountains are real, "satisfactory" mountains. One sees the whole of them. Their rugged wildness, their coloration, their nearness, all contribute to the satisfaction of the visitor and he feels that at last he has a "front seat" and is "getting his money's worth."

A fisherman in a boat on one of the clear lakes, in moments of leisure may look way down and like "Alice" speculate delightfully on what adventures might befall if he went "Through" its apparently immeasurable liquid "Looking-Glass" depths beneath. Or he may gaze around and be enthralled by the beauty on every side. He can lean back and scan the precipitous slopes beginning at the shore of the lake a few yards away; perhaps discern, as small, slowly moving, white specks, a bunch of Rocky Mountain goats half or two-thirds the way toward the towering peak, and patiently follow their course across its breast. Or he can idly watch fleecy clouds drifting in a sea of blue above the ragged tops of the rocky walls and peaks or across their faces. The very layers of rock, with their colors and folds running continuously for miles perhaps then to be broken off abruptly, reappearing again on an adjacent peak at a different elevation, and then located again at possibly the same elevation but lying on a different slope, offer unlimited opportunities for speculation as to their history and to the enjoyment of "things as they are."

From Belton one enters the Park by means of an automobile stage to the foot of lake McDonald—about three miles—and then, by a substantial motor launch, proceeds some ten miles up the lake to "Lewis" Hotel at the mouth of a stream coming from Sperry Glacier to the lake and near the head of the latter. Lake Mc Donald is one of the larger lakes in the Park. It is a beautiful sheet of water enclosed by wooded hills or ranges, and around its head and beyond it are rugged craggy peaks. Early in the season the fishing in the lake is said to be good and many big fish, including the large "Bull-trout," are reported. But there are many motor boats, "Evinrudes" and the like, drumming over it soon after the season opens, and then the trout that will bite are scarce.

There are also good sized "Whitefish" to be taken in this water. I caught a few with a fly and identified them with the "Squawfish" of the lakes at Sicamous on the Central Pacific Railway, but I may have been wrong. I could not strike any trout in Lake McDonald in spite of my efforts in this direction on two different days.

Through the kindly assistance of the "Information" clerk at Lewis', I made the acquaintance of a delightful man—somewhat older than myself—who was preparing to go in with a guide to Arrow Lake, some 15 miles (by trail) to the northwest of Lake McDonald, and he expressed himself as glad to have me join them.

So we started the next day after lunch. Each of us carried in a small sack our "necessaries," and with our rods in one hand and the reins in the other (if it didn't also at times include the horn of the saddle), with the guide leading a pack-horse carrying a tent, an axe, the kitchen and eating utensils and the grub for two days, we made our way over a good trail around the head of Lake Mc Donald and then westerly and northerly over a spur of the mountain down to Trout Lake. Some of the views from the trail were fine. Huckleberries were plen-

tiful on the further side of the ridge and could be enjoyed from the saddle. We saw two moose or elk some distance off in the swamp at the lower end of Trout Lake.

The beaches or shores of the lake (where accessible) are generally flat and run out under the water from ten to twenty or more feet, when they drop steeply and the water becomes quite deep—perhaps 200 feet. One wades well out in the shallow water—it was not too cold—and casts over the deeper. The trout especially the larger ones come up from the depths to take the fly. It is quite thrilling to see them come for it, grab it, and turn back to the depths, all of this being readily distinguished in the still glass-clear water. I soon learned one trick about cut-throat trout. It is best not to use "dry flies" and to let the fly stop and sink occasionally after the cast. Also it is necessary to let them get it and turn instead of striking as quickly as in other cases.

We had a good fish dinner that night and they proved excellent eating.

Late in the day another party consisting of a man and his wife and a guide arrived. They pitched their camp 50 yards away from us on about the only site left available because of a large bank of snow still remaining unmelted and occupying the greater portion of the bare flat ground at the foot of the mountain to the northeast. Perhaps 500 yards up the slope of the mountain was an even larger snow bank, but neither inconvenienced us in the least.

That night we lashed the flys at the tent entrance together and hung a "trench-wire alarm," consisting of an empty can with a small stone in it, to the ties. It was rattled once or twice during the night by Bruin but a lighted match and a yell from our guide drove him off. We were awakened once by shrieks from the other party's camp, followed by language from their guide. He told me the next morning that "Mister Bear had progged around" their two tents and even come into his where the food was, so he had to get up and drive him out with a club.

Finding, the next morning, that this other party were to go back that afternoon to Lewis' and that they would be able to give us some provisions they would not use as well as to take in a message for us, we decided to stay a couple of days longer and gave them all the fish we had when they left.

Then our guide and I decided to build a raft, which we finished at 3 p.m. We got some good fishing from it that evening and the next day.

The morning of our last day at Arrow Lake, Mr. C. and I started on the raft for the lower end of the lake. Although it was after 8 a.m. and brilliantly clear, the sun had not reached the water, though it was well down the western slopes to the lake, as we paddled our way along the western shore.

We followed up the east side of Trout Lake to the stream entering it at its head, then up this stream about five miles to Arrow Lake, and around the west shore of the latter, perhaps a half mile, to our camping ground at its head.

The trail above Trout Lake was poor, rough, rocky and full of spring holes or soft muddy pockets. Our horses were clever not to break their legs.

The camp ground, which we reached about 4:30 p.m. was a small flat, hardly a hundred yards wide and extending northerly up the valley, down the westerly side of which came the stream from the smaller lakes farther up it. Most of the valley seemed covered with brush, more or less in thickets, between which rank grass grew. This was the food for the horses. So we unsaddled and turned them loose to wander up the valley. The guide said they would be all right and could not start back down the trail without passing over our camp, which they would not do unless a grizzly got after them. In that case we should try to keep ahead of the horses.

By the time we got the tent pitched—in spite of a strong wind that came up the lake, and in the thinly sheltering bushes, impeding our more or less unaccustomed efforts—and the bough-bed made, it was near the early dark of a cloudy afternoon and "chow time." Fishing that day was out of the question.

We turned in early and slept willingly and comfortably when the bears would let us. There seemed to be several of the black variety around, and, as we had brought all our things, including our grub, into the tent, they were constantly trying to get in after the food. A light or a yell was enough to scare them off temporarily but they were persistent. I don't know how many times the guide crawled out to drive them off. And once the horses seemed to have an idea of straying back down the trail to Lewis'. So he had to shoo them back up the canyon. But it wasn't so bad after all, and the spruce or fir bed did smell and feel good.

The next morning Mr. C. and I started out to fish the lake. The easterly shore permits one to make short flycasts from numerous places for two-thirds of its length—the northerly shore, anywhere, and the westerly shore for one-fourth to one-third its length from the head of the lake. The remainder of the lake's circumference is impracticable for fishing from it and no boats exist.

I used my lancewood rod or a split bamboo, 8½-foot, 6-ounce rod with usually two flies on No. 6 or No. 8 hooks. The lake is full of "cut-throat trout." They are reported to run as high as 5 pounds but I caught none over 2. I succeeded this morning in taking fifteen or twenty that weighed in the aggregate about an equal number of pounds.

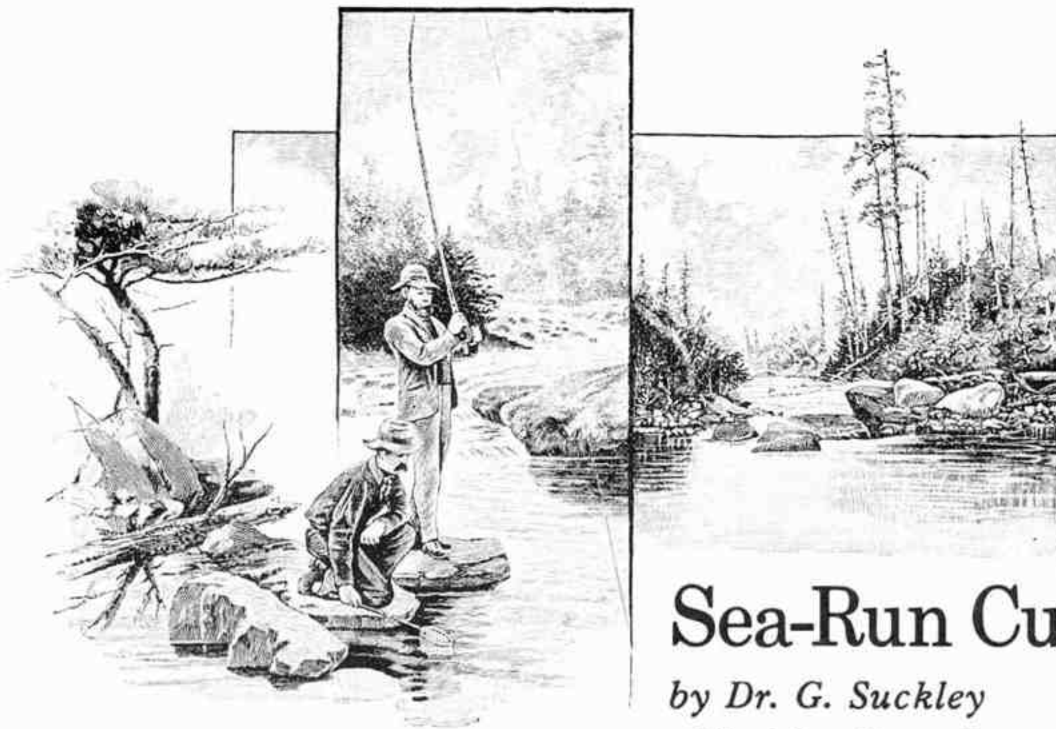
We occasionally rested to fish but there wasn't much "doing." It is my belief that one can be too early in this western fishing. But the sunrise over the mountain top to the east was wonderful. I have never before seen a ridge, wooded to the top as it happened to be, between us and the sun glow, almost every "spill" of the evergreens stood out by itself, as brilliantly as the delicate threads and figures of the old time "glass worker" at the county fair used to, against a sky blue in the main but tinged with various colors as it approached the ridge line where it was the color of melted gold.

This effect lasted for some minutes and finally a flame, too brilliant to look at, shot up for a considerable height above it all. This widened at the base, shrunk down from its peak and suddenly changed into a generous sector of His Majesty, the Sun. The white-hot-glass effect of the trees lingered for an instant and then vanished, and we turned to our fishing in the now sunlit waters.

By eleven o'clock I had seven fish weighing 10 pounds on my string and Mr. C. four at his end of the raft, and it was time to start for camp so that we should lunch, pack, and hit the trail at one for Lewis'.

As we landed at the camp, the guide called to us, "Come and get it, and clean the fish afterward." So I took the two strings of fish and laid them together in the shade of a pine bush on the way to the tent and not over twenty-five feet from it. We went into the tent, sat down, and ate our lunch. I was nearest the opening but my back was toward it. Mr. C. and the guide faced the opening. As soon as lunch was finished, Mr. C. said to me, "If you will help catch the horses I'll clean the fish," to which I readily agreed. He said, "Where are they" and I said "Right here" stepping with him toward the bush. There were his four all right, but my string was gone. The black-coated thief had won at last, though not one of us had heard a sound nor seen a sign of him turning the trick.

A half hour later while cinching my horse, she suddenly looked around past me. I turned to see what she was looking at, and there, between two bushes on a little ridge perhaps 30 yards away, was Mr. Bear, licking his chops and evidently headed back for the string he had left behind. The guide and I chased him off, but he did not go far and re-appeared within fifty yards a little later. He seemed in good condition and would probably have weighed 300 pounds.



Sea-Run Cutthroats

by Dr. G. Suckley
edited by Steve Raymond

The following account is excerpted from Volume VII, Book II, of the Reports of Explorations and Surveys to Ascertain the Most Practicable and Economical Route for a Railroad from the Mississippi River to the Pacific Ocean, *made under the direction of the Secretary of War and "according to Acts of Congress" from 1853 to 1855. Prepared by Thomas H. Ford, Printer, in Washington, D.C., in 1860, and presented to the 36th Congress, it includes a "Report Upon the Fishes Collected on the Survey" by Dr. G. Suckley, U.S.A. At that time there was great confusion over the different species of Pacific salmon and trout in the Northwest, and the same fish at different stages in its life cycle often was mistaken for a separate species – as will be apparent in Suckley's account. But Suckley's report does contain what may be the first recorded capture, by a fly fisherman, of a coastal or sea-run cutthroat trout.*

We begin with Suckley's description of a fish he identifies as Salmo Masoni:

I obtained this species at the *Cath-la-pootl* river *(possibly the modern Cathlamet – Ed.),* August 2, 1853, and am indebted for it to the skill of Captain McClellan *(George Brinton McClellan, later commander of the Army of the Potomac in the Civil War – Ed.),* as he took it with the artificial fly at a time when they did not readily bite at any bait. The Indians brought to our camp about the same time what I supposed to be the same species, some of them two feet long.

When fresh its colors were as follows: Back, dark olive; sides, silvery with green and purple reflections; belly, white; iris, yellow; spots black . . . For reasons that seem to me sufficiently good, I have considered this fish distinct from that described as *Salmo Clarkii* by Richardson, and have named it in honor of my good friend Governor Charles H. Mason, of Washington Territory, who has so frequently aided me in adding to my collections specimens of great interest and value in various branches of natural history . . .

There is a trout very common in the small streams emptying into Puget Sound, near Fort Steilacoom, during the latter summer months and early autumn, which resembles this species very closely, and probably is identical with it. They are caught freely with either common bait, or the "artificial fly," but by preference choose more readily half-dried *Salmon-roe,* which fishermen, who are not too sportman-like to indulge in such unartistic angling, very frequently use, preferring the roe in its half-dried, glutinous, sticky condition, because it adheres more readily to the hook. With such bait, and with "artificial flies," the writer has taken in a few hours large "strings" of handsome trout, on one occasion catching thirty-four fish, the aggregate weight of which, when some hours out of the water, amounted to fifteen pounds. A favorite place for catching these fish is McAllister's creek, a small stream about eight miles from Olympia, the capital of Washington Territory. The best "spots" for fishing there are below the "old mill site," at a point where the stream meanders through the Nisqually "tide prairies," and where the tide ebbs and flows strongly. The best angling is had during the last of the *ebb,* and half through the *flood,* at which time the trout, having retreated to the deep holes, can be caught very rapidly. At the same place I have caught with a hook and line several young "silver salmon," such as might be called by the English *grilse.*

(Editor's note: Suckley then proceeds to a fish he identifies as a separate species, which he calls Fario Stellatus:*)*

This trout is found in all the rivers about Shoalwater Bay, and above tidewater take the hook readily in spring and fall. I consider it entirely a fresh water fish, though called there 'salmon trout.' It grows to the length of two feet, and is said sometimes to weigh fifteen pounds. In color it closely resembles the preceding.

The trout of Oregon and Washington Territories, which replace the *Salmo fontinalis,* or common trout of the middle and Atlantic states, belong to two species, very similar to each other in their habits, which are also much like those of their Atlantic congener just mentioned. They belong to the species last described and to the present kind.

The *S. Stellatus* is very abundant in all the brooks and small rivers emptying into the lower Columbia and Puget Sound. It seems to enter the more rapid streams early in the spring, but I doubt whether it can be strictly called *anadromous,* as it is found in sluggish fresh

water at all seasons; and I have caught it frequently from small lakes and brooks having no connexion with the sea at any season. When living in brooks near the sea they seem to avail themselves, however, of the invigorating effects of salt water, as I have caught them sparingly in such situations; but, as already stated, access to the sea seems to be by no means absolutely necessary even to health. The spawning season appears to be at its height in mid-winter, and lasts, occasionally, in certain individuals, as late as the first of March.

While stationed at Fort Steilacoom I frequently amused myself by angling for trout, either using the "artificial fly" or common bait. Angle-worms being not found, as yet, in that region *(they are now – Ed.),* I was obliged to rely upon *meat, fresh fish,* and *salmon-roe,* when desirous of using natural bait. Unlike the *S. fontinalis,* this trout does not delight in the rough, foaming, swift waters of rapids and cascades, but seemingly prefer streams having a *gentle* current, and is even not averse to the still waters of *quiet lagoons,* providing that they be cold, deep, and clear. Like the Atlantic species they are fond, in summer-time, of lying in shady situations during the heat of the day. They are found in many of the small lakes, on the Nisqually plains, near Fort Steilacoom, from which they can be taken in great numbers with the "fly," affording much sport to the scientific angler. The largest caught by me, in that vicinity, were taken in February from the tidal waters of a small mill-stream. They weighed a little more than two pounds each, and were the largest of the species that I have ever seen. I doubt very much whether they are taken over three pounds in weight, from half to three-quarters of a pound being more common. The fish just mentioned, as taken by me, were caught with a large, gaudy, *unnatural* salmon-fly. In the same stream, but from the brackish water near its mouth, I caught, in January, 1854, many trout. Some were taken with the "revolving spoon," and others with the "fly," or with meat. At that season they were generally soft and "flabby," and seemed to be in an anaemic condition consequent upon spawning. Other specimens, even at a considerably later period, had not yet spawned, and, when caught, seemed literally overflowing with milt and mature ova, which were plentifully discharged on the slightest pressure, or even when jarred while being carried strung, in the ordinary manner, on a stick. A fish, in bad condition, taken at that time, had the following colors: Back bright olive; belly light yellowish white; numerous black spots on head, sides, and fins. Patches, under the chin, of very pale yellowish vermilion, *not bright red,* as in the same fish when in good order. Other fish taken while in the same condition showed much more of the unhealthy red blotches, &c., so frequently alluded to in this report. In common with the other trout this is called the *kwuss-putl* by the Nisquallies *(Nisqually Indians – Ed.).* It is a fine active trout, affording much sport to the angler, and is a hardy fish, capable of adapting itself to very varied circumstances . . .

Museum News

SECOND ANNUAL NEW YORK AUCTION

On March 18, the Museum held its second New York Auction-Raffle, and the results were encouraging in all respects. This year, through the offices of Museum Vice President Gardner Grant, we were able to hold the auction at the Yale Club of the City of New York, on Vanderbilt Avenue. The Yale Club has recently been host to the auctions of other organizations, and all the arrangements were superb; an elaborate spread of refreshments was provided, to the delight of all the guests.

The total income from this year's auction was more than $12,000, an increase of 50% from our first New York auction. As the Museum gets better known, the support we receive from fishing tackle manufacturers and other related businesses grows, so that our list of prizes improves each time. Attendance was also considerably higher than last year, though we hope to see it increase next year.

As last time, our key "advance man" in the city was Gardner Grant. Hosts included Lyman Foss, Ben Upson, Dick Kress, Leon Martuch, and (hostess) Ginger Foss. We were fortunate enough to have the services of Will Godfrey, of Mapleton, Utah, as auctioneer. Gardner Grant arranged this through Will, who has been doing outstanding work at recent Federation of Fly Fishermen auctions. Will, a well known western fishing guide and tackle shop owner (with a less well known Ph.D. in Economics), put on a great show, weaving an entertaining assortment of yarns, jokes, and innuendoes into his auctioneering. We hope to be able to enlist his assistance in future auctions.

While we have your attention on this subject, we want to thank the following businesses and individuals who contributed to this year's auction. Their support is greatly appreciated, and we want you to know who they are.

COMPANIES

The Bow River Company
Champoeg Press
Cortland
Crossroads of Sport
Eagle Claw
Fly Fisherman Magazine
Frontiers Travel International
Garcia
Gray's Sporting Journal
Hardy Brothers
H.L. Leonard
Bud Lilly's Trout Shop
Nick Lyons Books
Orvis
Rivermeadows, Inc.
Rod and Reel Magazine
Scientific Anglers
Sportsman's Edge
Steamboat Inn
Tropic Star Lodge
21 Club
Wild Wings, Inc.
Wild Wings Shop of Bozeman
Woodstream

INDIVIDUALS

Maxine Atherton
Henry Bruns
Robert Buckmaster
Dick Finlay
Gardner Grant
Susie Isaksen
Capt. Mike Hewlett
Lefty Kreh
Dana Lamb
John Merwin
George Northup
Leigh Perkins
Ogden Pleissner
Capt. Nat Ragland
Lee Richardson
Capt. Harry Spear
Bob Stearns
Dave Whitlock

RECENT ACQUISITIONS

We hope to list all recent donations in our next issue, but for now we might report on a few exceptionally interesting ones. We have received from Mrs.

Adele Jennings a very important donation: the correspondence, articles, manuscripts, and stream journals of the late Preston Jennings. Jennings' *Book of Trout Flies* was one of the most important milestones in American fishing literature, and here we have a fabulous wealth of documentary material relating to his work as a pioneer angling entomologist. Among the letters are ones from many of the well known anglers of his day, including La Branche, Skues, Connett, Lambuth, and others. This gift deserves the often misused label of unique; it will be a source of learning and enjoyment for the Museum for a long time. Once a thorough inventory has been completed we will begin the process of preparing some parts of this material to be shared through publication. We have already expressed our gratitude to Mrs. Jennings, but wish to repeat publicly how pleased we are to receive this collection. We also must thank Nick Lyons for helping arrange the donation and handling the transfer of the material.

Among other recent donations is a selection of original Charles DeFeo salmon flies, along with his personal fly tying vice, given us by Dr. Rudy Coigney. We hope to feature these in an upcoming issue of the magazine.

IN OUR NEXT ISSUE

Alec Jackson, book collector and Atlantic salmon enthusiast, commemorates the recent republication of Kelson's *The Salmon Fly* with a study of the book, its author, and the two editions. Jim Merritt, among whose responsibilities at Princeton University is care of the magnificent Kienbusch Collection of angling books, offers a profile of Carl Otto von Kienbusch that is both lively and instructive; among his contributions to angling literature was the discovery of the sole known copy of *The Arte of Angling*, by William Samuel (1577). Among the Museum treasures to be featured will be our Murphy rods, built by Charles Murphy at the dawn of the modern split-bamboo era in America. These may be the rarest commercially-made fly rods; the Museum currently has two of perhaps eight known to exist, and we are doubly fortunate in that ours are in such fine condition. You'll also be getting a look at some favorite Michigan dry flies, including several Paul Young patterns and Halladay's original Adams.

ALMOST UNANIMOUS APPROVAL

We have been gratified — not to say relieved — by the response to the new magazine design we introduced in our last issue. We'll spare you any quotations from letters, and restrict our editorial backslapping by just telling you that almost everyone seems to like it. In fact, the only negative response came from the Editor's brother, whose name was immediately removed from the membership list, and who should not expect too much for his birthday this year.

OUR AUTHORS

Pete Hidy has lived in the west for many years, getting to know many of the rivers and the people who fished them. He is the author of numerous books and articles, and recently wrote for us about James Leisenring.

George Grant has long been one of the west's outstanding fly tiers. He also has been a significant force for stream conservation, serving for many years as editor of the Montana Trout Unlimited newsletter, *The River Rat*. His two books, previously published privately, will soon be published in expanded editions by Champoeg Press. The books are *The Master Weaver* and *Montana Trout Flies*.

Steve Raymond, who edited the Suckley report on sea-run cutthroats, is author of *The Year of the Angler* and *Kamloops*, and a Trustee and Vice President of the Museum. He has contributed frequently to the Museum magazine.

We also would like to thank the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Yellowstone Park, for providing most of the Yellowstone fishing accounts from their reference files.

BACK ISSUES AVAILABLE

We have available the following back issues of the Museum magazine: Vol. I, Nos. 3 and 4; Vol. II, Nos. 2, 3, and 4; Vol. IV, No. 2; Vol. V, Nos. 1, 2, 3, and 4; Vol. VI, Nos. 1, 2, 3, and 4; Vol. VII, No. 1. These are available for $3.00 each from the Secretary, The Museum of American Fly Fishing, Manchester, Vermont, 05254. Volume V, Number 1 is an index of the first five years of the magazine. Volumes I and II, as well as Volume III through Number 3, are 24 pages without color. All issues since Volume III, Number 4 are 32 pages with color.

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.

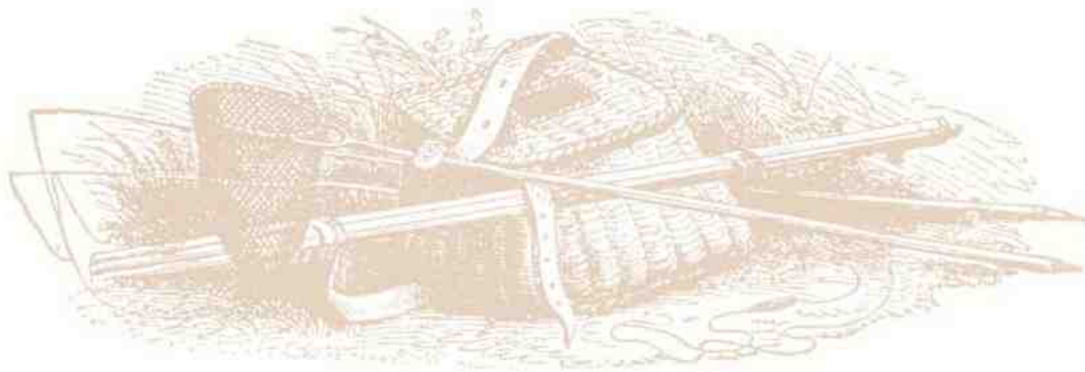
Associate	$ 15.00
Sustaining	$ 25.00
Patron	$100.00 and over
Sponsor	$250.00

All membership dues, contributions and donations are tax deductible.

Memorial proposed for Roderick Haig-Brown

It seems especially appropriate, since this issue of The American Fly Fisher *is devoted to western history, that we should be making this little announcement now. As we were putting the finishing touches on this issue we learned of a movement to establish a memorial to one of western angling's greatest figures, Roderick Haig-Brown, at Campbell River, British Columbia. The Haig-Brown/Kingfisher Creek Committee wants to raise $250,000 in order to purchase twenty-six acres of land adjacent to the Haig-Brown property at Campbell River; a stream restoration project on that land would create a natural spawning facility on the Haig-Brown farm for both salmon and trout. A more fitting memorial is hard to imagine.*

A second goal of the committee is to turn the Haig-Brown house into an angling shrine, wherein the books, tackle, and awards of the man many consider to have been America's finest angling writer can be preserved and enjoyed. There is some urgency to this project — there always seems to be, whenever something important is to be saved — and all necessary details are available from Mr. Van Egan, 2340 Campbell River Road, Campbell River, British Columbia, Canada, V9W 4N7. Mr. Egan tells us that the committee and the project have the full approval of the Haig-Brown family. It all sounds like a very good idea.



A Full Creel

Though we hope this issue of the magazine will encourage readers to pursue the subject of western angling history on their own, and though we think there is lots of work to be done in digging out that history, we would be remiss if we did not tell you that somebody – several somebodies, in fact – have been doing this very thing for nearly twenty years now. There is one unparalleled published source of western angling lore and history that we would like to pay brief tribute to. We're referring to the Bulletin of the Flyfisher's Club of Oregon.

The Creel first appeared in December, 1961, and has appeared once or twice each year since then. The Flyfisher's Club recently presented the Museum with a full set of *The Creel*, and we have already found it an invaluable reference source.

But *The Creel* is much more than that. It is, of course, the voice of one of the west's foremost angling societies. It is also singularly attractive among club publications; indeed, the design puts many commercial magazines to shame. It is also a chronicle of recent conservation work, announcing Federation of Fly Fishermen conclaves and other important developments. And it even finds time to be instructive, offering advice from sage veterans to newcomers on western waters. But perhaps most important, at least from our point of view, is the mood of the thing; there is a loving devotion not only to fishing but to its traditions. Every issue displays the Club's commitment to understanding and preserving its past. That commitment and its rewards was well expressed by the Editor of *The Creel* a few years ago in a profile of Thorson Bennett, "Master Steelheader of the Grand Ronde." The Editor said, "Tracking down, in their time, for these pages, the living legends of Pacific Northwest fly-fishing is as happy a chore as is the memorializing of departed ones always sorrow tinged." The accomplishments of *The Creel* over the past twenty years, both in literature and in history, are magnificent. Western angling history is in good hands.