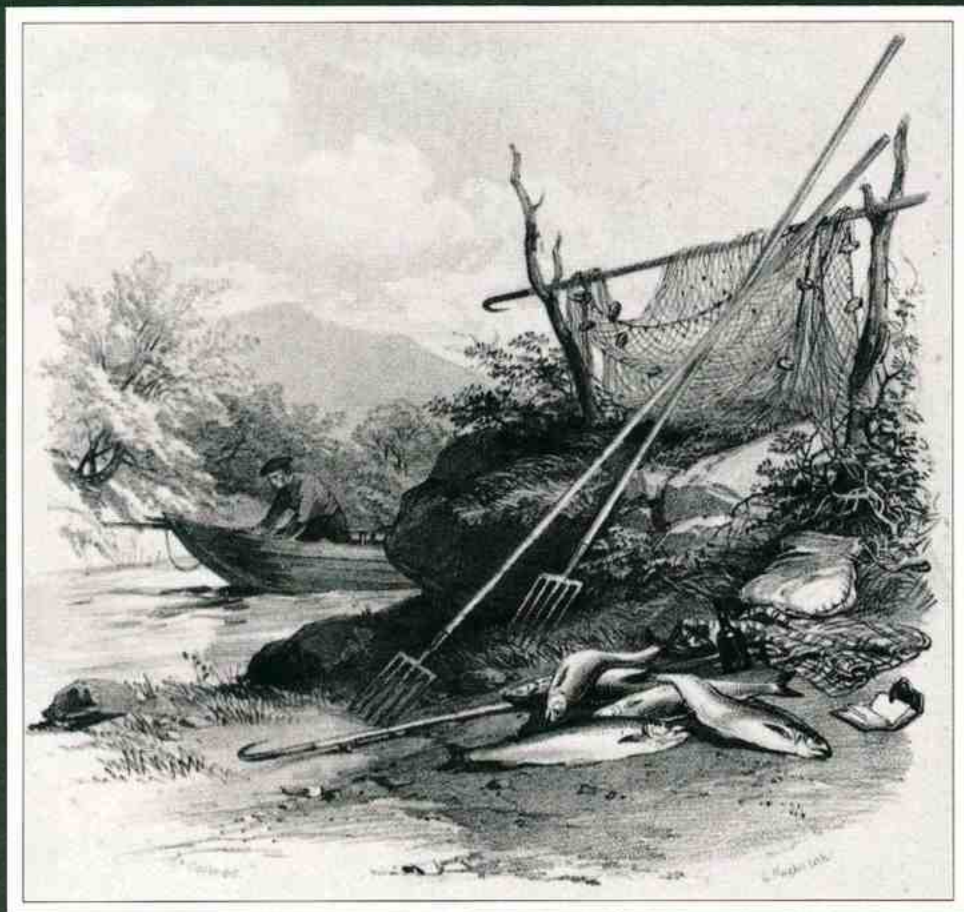

# The American Fly Fisher

SPRING 1992 VOLUME 18 NUMBER 2

# Spring Reveille

IT'S MID-MARCH as I write this. We're all—and I use the royal we—itching for winter to edge its way out the door. Like a bad actor who won't get off the stage, the season just won't give up its icy grip on the Northeast. Here in the office, we have a peculiar heating system that works on the premise "if you need heat now, you'll just have to wait 'til tomorrow," which means you have to be a weather forecaster—"let's see, 20 degrees predicted for tomorrow; better set the heat at notch 2 before I leave today." Sometimes we're caught off guard (although our new publishing office is admittedly, and thankfully, the coziest in the building)—in which event Randall, our art director, has to don fingerless mittens and her vertical ski hat. It's quite a sight to see her so begarbed as she attacks the computer with ferocious determination.

This issue of *The American Fly Fisher* (Spring 1992) was a delight to put together. Museum member Al Cohen of Dallas, Texas, has exhaustively researched the early origins and evolution of the salmon fly, putting together in one impressive document a myriad of resource, theory, and data that will provide scholars with a wealth of compiled material. I am also pleased to include a delightful piece by Timothy Belknap of New York City, a writer for *Business Week* magazine, who researched George LaBranche's country house High Holt—its place in his life and work—giving us another perspective on this legendary figure.

In addition, I am pleased to introduce a new feature section to the journal called "First Person" which will appear periodically. Here, notable figures in the angling world will talk in their own voices about their experiences, accomplishments, and whatever else they deem fit.

Our first "First Person" features Nick Lyons, book publisher and writer, whose contribution to this sport is more than legendary: it has been *vital* to our growth and enrichment. In our *Notes & Comment* department, we introduce Norm Crisp, a scientist with the U. S. Environmental Protection Agency based in Kansas City, who recounts his medieval experiment of fishing with a horsehair tippet, à la Izaak Walton and *The Compleat Angler*. Read it and weep.

This journal will arrive during the height of the 1992 fishing season, but I hope you'll spare time to come indoors for a thorough read (or for an even greater appreciation of our sport's heritage, take it with you to savor during a break on the bank of your favorite stretch of water). We've been pleased to see our readership in such active communication with *The American Fly Fisher*; because we consider ourselves a forum as well as an historical journal we are keenly interested in your letters, notes, and comments, so keep at it, please.

One of the images that kept me hopeful during a nasty siege of pneumonia this winter was that of a clear, cold stream full of fat and healthy fish, surrounded by the magic verdancy of a Vermont May day. May all of you continue to find your own peace and reward on the water during these precious halcyon days.

MARGOT PAGE
EDITOR

Illustration from *The Compleat Angler or The Contemplative Man's Recreation* by Izaak Walton and Charles Cotton (London: J. C. Nimmo, 1889).

## The American Museum of Fly Fishing

*Preserving a Rich Heritage for Future Generations*


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# The American Fly Fisher

*Journal of The American Museum of Fly Fishing*


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ON THE COVER: *In this Spring 1992 issue, Al Cohen tackles a virtual* terra incognita: *the early history of the Atlantic salmon fly, gathering references that range geographically over England, Scotland, Ireland, Wales, Canada, and North America. Frontispiece from William Scrope,* Days and Nights of Salmon Fishing in the Tweed *(London: John Murray, 1843).*


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# LETTERS

## Positive Feedback

In the last issue of *The American Fly Fisher* you asked for input on how you were doing. This is to let you know that I think you are doing fine. Very fine. I have dropped my subscription to other national magazines because I care little about reading the latest hype on how and where to catch big, huge, enormous lunker, "hawg" trout, bass, and bonefish. In contrast, your magazine provides something worth reading and I sincerely look forward to its arrival. The recent articles on silk (Fall 1991) were delightfully esoteric and informative, the Recommended Reading section led me to Wayne Fields (a particular treasure for those of us recently past forty), and I will read the bamboo rod evaluations many times even though (and perhaps because) I disagree with some of the assessments. The earlier article on the original Jock Scott(s) (see "The 'True' Original Jock Scott—All Three of Them," Summer 1991) is another fine example of the type of material I seek. Your efforts are appreciated and enjoyed. Thanks for the enjoyable reading, keep up the class act, and please keep the "Secrets of Hooking Big Browns" and the like off the cover! I feel confident that you will.

*Terry Finger*
*Columbia, Missouri*

## Braiding Line: A Western Perspective

The Fall issue of *The American Fly Fisher* (Fall 1991, vol. 17, no. 3), particularly its stories relating to silk leaders and lines, caught my attention and provided some entertaining and informative reading.

Because Sunset has been a friendly competitor to Cortland and U. S. Line Company for many years, the interviews of Leon Chandler and Chet Cook reported in John Mundt's article were of special interest. The method they both describe for tapering braided fly lines surprised me somewhat, however, since it was so less efficient than that used by Sunset in the 1930s, and 1940s (even into the 1950s after which synthetic fibers replaced silk in line manufacture). With a few exceptions, Sunset learned of and employed new and better ways of making lines after the means had become common knowledge among its competitors, clustered, as they then were, in close proximity at the opposite end of the country. Occasionally, line design features pertinent to West Coast fishing may have moved eastward, but virtually all line manufacturing technology came from the east and went west.

The process of splicing in strands of greater or lesser yarn count to create tapers during the braiding stage of a line, such as Mundt's story relates, required a great deal of operator attention and markedly inhibited the potential production rate of the braiders. Sunset produced tapered lines by braiding together tapered strands, allowing the braiders to run continuously, uninterrupted by bobbin changes. In the Cortland/U. S. Line Company Process, lines were, in essence, individually manufactured, and a production sequence could, though it unlikely did, include a variety of tapers and sizes of lines. With Sunset's method, fifteen or eighteen lines, depending upon their finished length, were braided in a set and required an operator's active attention only to load the braider with bobbins and start it.

The tapering of the strands wound onto the braider bobbins involved many times the amount of labor required to wind level strands, but even so, the bobbins could still be wound many times faster than the braiders could consume them, making this approach to manufacturing tapered lines proportionately more efficient than that used by Cortland and U. S. Line. The bobbin winding required a special machine that I suppose was designed and built in-house. It consisted of a creel from which fed silk threads, a series of comblike guides to keep the threads separate and accessible to an operator, and a take-up device with four spindles to accommodate four bobbins each (for use on a 16-carrier braider), two spindles extending from either side of a central drive, a yarn traversing mechanism, and a means of metering the strand being wound onto the bobbins. Two operators, responsible for eight bobbins apiece, sat facing each other, with the threads passing between them, added and removed threads according to formulas for the individual lines and tapers. One operator controlled the starting and stopping of the machine, so that the thread count adjustments were identically placed in the sixteen-bobbin strands, and the sixteen bobbins were kept together to be braided as a set.

An example of bobbin-winding instructions for what today would be a 5-weight double taper, pulled from among old production records, reads: "HEH Silk/ 8 ft. 3 ends/ 8 12 ft. 3 to 8 ends 1 thd. every 7 ½ in./ 20 80 ft. 8 ends/ 100 12 ft. 8 to 3 ends 1 thd. every 7 ½ in./112 4 ft. 3 ends/ 116/ 18 Lines on Bobbins." The first number given in lines three through seven is the meter reading at the various steps in the sequence. I am unsure what constituted an "end" or "thd.", the term used in this letter, having little knowledge of silk. To obtain the line diameters indicated by the letter sizing, depending upon the gauge of the silk strand used, if there is grading of silk on that basis, the "thread" could consist of from twelve to twenty-four filaments. I suspect the filaments were only plied with a single twist rather than plied and finished with a second twist, as a sewing thread typically is. I saw the bobbin winding equipment in operation on a few occasions in the early 1960s, before it finally went out of use, preparing synthetic yarns for braided taper fly lines. Unfortunately, I can't recall how the threads were spliced into the bobbin strands to prevent their ends from protruding from the finished braid or becoming bunched up at a braider carrier guide. Subsequent processing could eliminate the former, but the latter would irreversibly ruin a line.

I've written a fair amount on a very small point that can be of interest to only a very few persons, at least one of whom, I hope, is associated with the Museum. *The American Fly Fisher* is very entertaining and I look forward to its arrival at the office each quarter.

*John M. Agnew*
*Sunset Line & Twine Company*
*Petaluma, California*

## An Aside on the "Bare Cheek"

First off, I would like to offer a word of congratulations on the fine journal you put out, which seems to improve with each edition.

I read with interest J. David Zincavage's article on the origins of the Jock Scott ("The 'True' Original Jock Scott—All Three of Them," Summer 1991, vol. 17, no. 2). The caption alongside the fine photograph of the fly tied by Paul Schmookler refers to the use of hackle from the "cymnogene," an African eagle. Out here it is called the *gymnogene*, meaning "bare cheek," and it is a rather curious bird which I not infrequently see raiding nests around my garden in Natal. It is far from rare, seemingly well adapted to urban conditions, and most times when we go into the mountains

trout fishing we spot one or two.

The interesting question is how the gymnogene feather came to be used for fly tying in the first place. I have tied flies in Africa for thirty years and this is the first such reference I have seen to it.

I have delightful memories of a visit I paid to the Museum some years back. The whole concept is a great credit to the trustees and, along with a visit to the famous Orvis Company, makes Manchester a very popular port of call for visiting South Africans.

*Tom Sutcliffe*
*Pietermaritzburg, South Africa*

## Background From a Music Lover

When leafing through the Summer 1991 issue of *The American Fly Fisher* (vol. 17, no. 2), which I picked up at the local library, the photo on page 11 of Major Glenn Miller in his World War II uniform caught my eye. I was intrigued to learn that he was an avid fisherman. I remember him as a great musician, one whose style made him a legend in the era of Big Band giants such as Benny Goodman, Tommy Dorsey, Harry James, and Count Basie.

I met him in the summer of 1939 when he opened at the Glen Island Casino in Rye, New York. By fall he had won radio contracts for the Glenn Miller shows and he was on his way. Ray Eberle, brother of Bob who sang with Jimmy Dorsey, was the male vocalist. Marian Hutton, Betty's sister, handled the female vocals. Tex Beneke, the saxophonist, still sings "Chattanooga Choo-Choo" as he conducts today's touring Glenn Miller Band. Leigh Knowles, jump trumpet, carved out a second career with Beaulieu Vineyards in California where he recently retired as chairman of the board.

The next time I came across him was in 1947 when I was stationed at Army Headquarters in Frankfurt, Germany. Unfortunately, it was in a cable file labeled: "Disappearance of Major Glenn Miller." The file discussed plans of the Allied Forces to celebrate the successful advance across France in 1944 by holding a Victory Ball in Paris at Christmas time. Major Glenn Miller and his Army Air Corps Band would be brought over from England as a feature attraction. About December 5, 1944, as I recall, Miller and the advance party who would make arrangements for the ball took off from England in a C-47 for Paris. A flurry of cables followed. From Paris: "Major Glenn Miller and party overdue two hours. Pls. advise." From England: "Major Miller and group departed on schedule in C-47 No. _. Weather over English Channel marginal. Have alerted Air-Sea Rescue." From Paris: "Major Miller group now 3 hours overdue. Have alerted appropriate commands. Keep posted."

The cables traced the conduct of a major air-sea rescue operation but the plane and its passengers were never heard from again. A sad and mysterious ending. Fortunately, though, the spirit and magic that Glenn Miller brought to his music reaches out to wider audiences with each passing year.

*Jack Kelly*
*Manchester, Vermont*

## Birth of the FFF: One Night

I read with great interest the fine memoriam accorded to Lee Wulff in the *The American Fly Fisher* by Joe A. Pisarro (Summer 1991, vol. 17, no. 2), and, among many of his fly angling peers, am saddened at his untimely passing—it is undeniable that Lee made some of the greatest contributions to our sport in the last century. This writer was inspired by his use of the "midge type" rod for Atlantic salmon back in the 1950s and, as a result, he pioneered the use of this rod for our steelhead trout here in the Northwest.

I am a fifty-two-year member of the Washington Fly Fishing Club of Seattle and was president in 1955. Along with two other past presidents of our club, Vince Sellen and Don Ives, we were instrumental in helping form the Evergreen Fly Fishing Club of Everett, Washington. My reason for writing is to correct a misconception that appeared in Mr. Pisarro's article crediting Mr. Wulff for the founding of the Federation of Fly Fishers. I take nothing away from Mr. Wulff's personal conservation efforts and contributions to our sport—they are legendary. Having been a personal participant in the initial conception of the idea of a national conclave I can unequivocally state that the sole credit should be awarded to William "Bill" Nelson of Eugene, Oregon. At the time Bill lived in Everett, Washington, and was active in the Evergreen Fly Fishing Club of that city. I attended several of their meetings and one evening several of us retired to a restaurant for a cup of coffee after the meeting had adjourned. We discussed the problems that fly clubs were having promoting our causes and Bill suggested the idea of a national conclave in order to combine forces with our eastern counterparts. Some suggested that this would be a futile effort and felt that fly anglers in the East could not be persuaded to join our cause. Bill was adamant, however, and insisted we pursue his idea. Later he moved to Eugene, Oregon, and in conjunction with the newly formed McKenzie Fly Fishers Club, and the fine efforts by anglers such as Skip Hosfield and Dave Carlson, among others, the FFF became a reality. I was a delegate (with others in our club) to the first FFF Conclave in Eugene and had the personal pleasure of meeting Lee Wulff, Gene Anderegg, Ted Trueblood, Ed Zern, and other eastern sportsmen who no doubt consummated the fulfilment of a desire by fly anglers all over the country to bring this fine organization to fruition. I am not attempting to disegard the contributions of the aforementioned sportsmen, nor Mr. Pisarro himself for his exemplary memoriam to Lee Wulff, for whom I have the deepest respect and admiration. I only wish to give credit where credit is due: to Bill Nelson who *alone conceived* and nurtured the idea of a fly fishing confederation. I know because I was there on that memorable night.

*Walter C. Johnson*
*Arlington, Washington*

## Congrats and It Could Have Been Worse

Kudos! Summer 1991 (vol. 17, no. 2) will be *forever* treasured. We who read the journal never see all the magnificent effort which goes into each number—especially in this technospeak age (see frustrated editorial, "Technospeak," Summer 1991—*Editor*). You were lucky—the Silver City Cafe is really a nice place. You *could* have reached the Idle Spurs, the Noisy Nag, or the Chili Bowl. Great places to access language to insert a three-quarter em dash. I eagerly await vol. 17, no. 3. Keep up the great work.

*Jim Schaaf*
*Creede, Colorado*

## Less is More

I enjoy your publication, even though I don't know one end of a rod from the other. Very readable stuff.

*Al Cartwright*
*Executive Director*
*International Association of Sports Museums and Halls of Fame*

THE AMERICAN FLY FISHER *welcomes letters and commentary from its readers. Please write to Editor, TAFF, P. O. Box 42, Manchester, Vermont 05254. All letters are subject to publication unless otherwise specified.*

# George LaBranche's High Holt: A Place in His Life and Work

## *by Timothy Belknap*

*THE PIONEERING dry-fly techniques of George LaBranche have been well-chronicled. This article looks at other aspects of LaBranche's life, after he had established his reputation and secured for himself a nest egg. It describes an imaginative man with the taste and the means to provide himself with the very best appointments of the sporting life.*

*Apart from a few letters, the article was drawn mostly from interviews. In many cases, the subjects allowed that they might not have total recall, as is the case with oral histories, and it is possible that more than one version of the old stories exists.* — *TIMOTHY BELKNAP*

ALTHOUGH WORK ON High Holt, George LaBranche's beloved retreat in upstate New York, didn't start until the late 1920s, the legend associated with it goes back to 1915. Nineteen fourteen had been a satisfying year for LaBranche, having seen the publication of his well-reviewed *The Dry Fly and Fast Water.* One year later the fates seemed to be toying with the forty-year-old stockbroker. He was relaxing up in the Canadian wilderness and had told his secretary he was not to be disturbed. But that was a moot point. Heavy rains had cut off the salmon camp, ruining the fishing, stranding the fishermen.

Whether or not there were salmon to be caught, LaBranche was in luck. He was holding a block of shares in Electric Boat Company, which was under contract to build submarines for the United States Navy—not yet a combatant in World War I. But the torpedoing of the *Luistania* on May 7, 1915, with the loss of 128 Americans, made the possibility of war greater—and Electric Boat became the hottest stock in the country.

Telegraph after telegraph was sent to LaBranche as his frantic colleagues on Wall Street sought permission to sell his shares—his secretary's instructions for privacy having been overruled. But for weeks there was no way of communicating with the camp. In New York, with

*Left: The portrait of George LaBranche with favorite rod (probably a Leonard), hat, and folding reel was painted by Gladys Brown, circa 1931. It hangs in grandson Michael LaBranche's home. Above: High Holt, the country retreat LaBranche built in Hillsdale, New York, during the flush 1920s after he hit it big with the sale of his Electric Boat shares, was host to many relatives and guests, weekend refugees from New York City, including Edna St. Vincent Millay.*

war fever mounting, frenzied bidding put Electric Boat up to eighty, and other shareholders reaped huge profits. It was decided to send a messenger to the camp. When he finally reached LaBranche, Electric Boat was around 190. But the run-up continued beyond all possible belief, and by the time LaBranche could sell, his shares had hit 400.

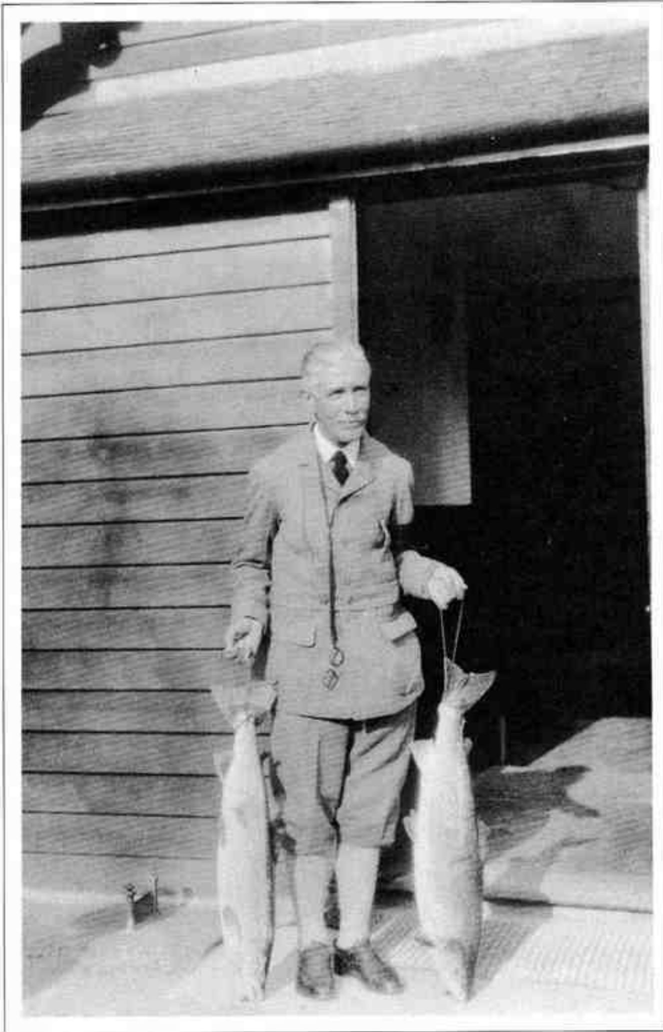
Already wealthy, LaBranche was now considerably wealthier. By the time he started planning High Holt on acreage in the towns of Hillsdale and Austerlitz, New York, local contractors would establish that he had a $10-million line of credit in New York City. Holt is a Scottish name for lair, and as far as was possible in upstate Columbia County, High Holt would be modeled on the sporting estates LaBranche had visited in Scotland. He hoped people would admire the place and, knowing the story of the salmon trip in Canada, say that it just went to show that there are worse things to do than go fishing.

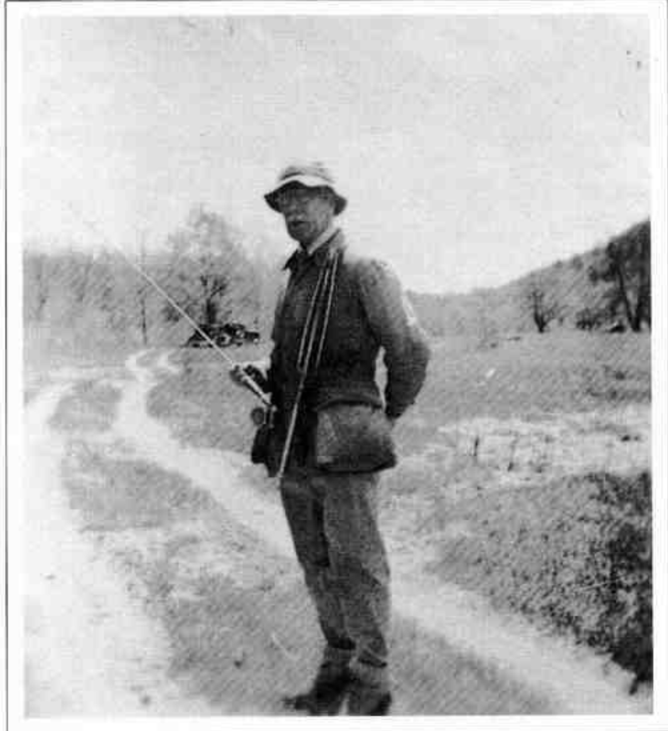
To be sure, though, not all the money came from luck. As a slight young man whose starched-collar attire and Edwardian mannerisms obscured the fact he was a high-school dropout from a modest New York City family, LaBranche had started out on Wall Street as a secretary. His boss was James Keene, an Englishman who had gone west for the Gold Rush and risen from miner to president of the San Francisco Stock Exchange. Back east, he became known on "the Street" as the Silver Fox. By simultaneously buying and selling shares, Keene could create *real* trading fever out of perceived fever, an accepted technique used at the time by J. P. Morgan, Sr., for boosting such new issues as U. S. Steel. LaBranche was a quick study and, in time, also became a market maker, commonly known as a specialist, for AT&T. (Now in the hands of great-grandson Michael, LaBranche & Company is still going strong.)

### A Country House in Green Hills

LaBranche wasn't the first wealthy city man to establish a retreat in Columbia County's green hills. But even in the flush 1920s, spending of such magnitude was remarkable. He bought fishing rights up and down the nearby Green River and acquired vast upland hunting grounds. Local contractor Ray Barden was told to build a lodge using "the best in everything, all the way through," according to realtor George Beach, now eighty-one. The total price for the house and its 1,800 acres was figured to be around $750,000.

Sam Dawson, a dairy farmer who today serves as Hillsdale's town supervisor, remembers as a boy how the pine flooring in attics and other rooms from local farms went the way of LaBranche's new lodge. Barden's men would then come and lay new flooring, swapping more durable wood for the aged pinewood that LaBranche wanted for his interior paneling. Beams from old barns support the ceiling of the vast living room at High Holt, which features a huge stone fireplace—one of six in the house—at one end, and a picture window at the other looking out over the heavily forested Berkshires on the New York/Massachusetts line. The house could





*Left: LaBranche proudly showing off salmon bounty, thought to be from the river Dee in Scotland. Above: LaBranche in the Catskills in the early 1930s in a photograph taken by fellow Anglers Club member Henry Davis. Photographs from the collection of daughter Elizabeth LaBranche, now housed in the American Museum of Fly Fishing.*

have been sited with any number of great vistas, and one wonders whether the eastern view suggests a man who preferred to be on the water at sunset than in an easy chair.

The plans included six bedrooms, three smaller rooms for servants' quarters, two tenant houses for the gamekeeper and other help, two ponds, a furnace room with a boiler that one guest described as big enough for the *Queen Mary* and, in addition to other utility rooms and a kitchen, a gun room.

The latter deserves a footnote in American *literary* history. LaBranche was no liberal—"Coolidge was his idol," according to neighbor Alan Bloch. But he was open-minded and had an eclectic bunch of friends. The notables entertained by George and Emmala LaBranche at High Holt ranged from Walt Disney to Austerlitz resident Edna St. Vincent Millay.

A free spirit if ever there was one, Millay had had an affair with another local poet, Arthur Davison Ficke. Over drinks one night at the LaBranche's, Ficke had asked her if she had written a particular sonnet—"And you as well must die, beloved dust"—to him. In the fall of 1945 Ficke was dying, and in a letter his old lover finally answered his question in the affirmative, going on to note: "I denied it at the time—but what a hell of a time, and what a hell of a place to ask me about it! A cocktail party in George LaBranche's gun room! Of course, you spoke in a voice so low. . . ."

There on the gun room's panelling to this day are the signatures of Millay and her husband, Eugen Jan Boissevain (dated May 3, 1931), along with those of other guests, including sculptor Paul Manship.

High Holt's 1,800 acres were assembled around 1916. About one-quarter of the acreage had been sheep pasture that was growing over, with huckleberries on one hill, blueberries elsewhere. The woods were deep and wild, and still are. Not far from the main house, near the headwater beaver ponds of the Green River, I saw a coyote running a doe one bitterly cold day last winter. Work on the house itself, however, wasn't started until about twelve years later, and the place was probably still smelling new when Millay and company put pencil to pinewood. Thus, construction on the project probably overlapped an even more seminal event on Wall Street than the legendary Electric Boat run-up: the stock market crash of 1929. Neighbor Alan Bloch recalls visiting LaBranche with his parents, Alexander and Blanche Bloch, both musicians: "One evening we were up there, talking about 1929, and my father said, 'I lost an awful lot of money in that crash.' My mother joked to George, 'Were you ever down to your last million?' and he looked absolutely shocked. 'Good God no, Blanche.'"

True to his designs on the place, LaBranche hired a Scotsman, Colin Macfarlane, to be the estate's caretaker, with primary responsibility for raising gun dogs and 6,000 pheasants a year, some of which were given to the state

*Shooting at High Holt circa 1931. Son George LaBranche, Jr., is in middle with hands in pocket.* Holt *is the Scottish word for* lair *and High Holt was modeled after the sporting estates LaBranche visited in Scotland. He hoped people would admire the place and say that it just went to show that there are worse things to do than go fishing. LaBranche hired a Scotsman, Colin Macfarlane, to look after his gun dogs (who were named after flies) and the 6,000 pheasant he raised a year.*

conservation department. LaBranche's daughter, Elizabeth (Betty), recalls: "My dad started with springers and English pointers, but we gave up the springers at my urging. I couldn't stand their technique, just running through the fields, flushing birds, and the guns were all stationed on a rise so they could shoot the birds as they came over."

One of LaBranche's grandchildren remembered his rite of passage at High Holt and the kindness of Macfarlane, "a salty old fellow—a nice man. I had never done any shotgun shooting and wasn't sure about shooting at birds anyway," Tony LaBranche said. "I was about nine or ten, it was a dreadfully cold November, and they dragged us up there . . . It was a long line and Dad (grandfather) LaBranche was way down the other end, and unfortunately I was by my father and my brother. The dogs pointed a bird, and Macfarlane took me in charge and said: 'You just walk up very close behind that dog and don't be surprised if that bird just explodes in front of you.' Of course, that's what happened, and instead of letting the bird get up in a sportsmanlike way, I let him have both barrels from the hip—almost blew an ear off the dog. Bird got away, of course. Everyone was aghast. My father was remonstrating that I had brought ignominy on the whole event or something, but Macfarlane said, 'Very snappy shot, very snappy shot,' and defended me to my grandfather."

Along with the abandoned European-style drives, the springers gave way to German shorthair pointers. LaBranche was one of the first Americans to import the breed, and the training of those pointers was a good part of Macfarlane's job in his many years of service to LaBranche. The dogs were named after flies, such as Royal Coachman, Parmachene Belle, Silver Doctor, and, of course, Pink Lady, a favorite on three counts: canine, piscatorial, and mixological.

### LaBranche, the Green, and Islamorada

LaBranche is usually associated with venerable Catskill and Pennsylvania waters rather than with the two streams near High Holt: the Green River and the Roeliff Jansen Kill. But local fishermen knew him well. Most of them, except for a brief fly-fishing craze in the 1930s, were worm men. But not Don Bell, a country lawyer who, as one of LaBranche's Hillsdale cronies, became somewhat of a local celebrity when he was pictured in a national magazine with the famous angler up on the Ausable. Bell and LaBranche tried to introduce rainbow trout to supplement the Roeliff Jansen's population of mostly browns and some brookies. Long-time Hillsdale resident George Colclough places the private stocking sometime in the 1920s and remembers Bell later shaking his head in disappointment that the stream's pasture stretches and limited depth proved to be too warm for the newcomers.

In comparison, the Green is a higher, more shaded, and thus colder stream. An old-timer once leaned over a driveway bridge as I fished below and told me that before the '38 hurricane, the Green held mostly brook trout, but they were washed away by the storm waters. Perhaps LaBranche and Bell decided to leave well enough alone, or perhaps authorization was an issue. At any rate, the Green, too, holds mostly browns these days. A bit small and overgrown for many fly fishers, it was no doubt a de-

light to a caster as skillful as LaBranche. The Green is a stalker's stream that, because of its gravel banks, should often be fished on one's knees, even on the wider stretches that LaBranche preferred after the stream crosses into Massachusetts. As he grew older and less inclined to travel, LaBranche fished the Green more often, usually out of his son's farm over the Massachusetts line in North Egremont. Other places owned by LaBranche included an elegant *pied a terre* on Park Avenue and a suburban home in Pelham, New York. There were fishing cottages on the Brodheads in Pennsylvania and at Islamorada in the Florida Keys, where he wintered and, as at High Holt, entertained heavily. "For the past month this house has been bulging with relatives and guests—some bidden and many unbidden—all wanting to go bonefishing," he wrote a friend from Florida in 1949. "Most of them know nothing about it. Net result: three rods broken, two reels wrecked, hundreds of yards of line lost, a ton of casting leads, and dozens of my best hooks. I won't mention the wine cellar. . . ."

### A Gadfly Aspect, Puckish Almost

At High Holt, Tony LaBranche remembers meals as being feasts for the mind rather than the palate. "We had to eat strange things, to us kids, like pig and poached salmon and pheasants with lots of shot in them. You used lead shot in those days, and it was really a ghastly meal." But at George LaBranche's table, one rule held sway: "You had to mean what you said. You had to be sharp and understand jokes," Tony LaBranche remembers. His grandfather "would play with you and harass you and josh with you in a very subtle manner. He would always be asking: 'Is that right? Is that the right way? What would you say to this situation?' Extremely Socratic, you might say. There was this gadfly aspect to him, puckish almost . . . He believed that we should use our wits."

LaBranche, who teaches literature at Loyola University of Chicago, notes that his grandfather's works, although perhaps better known for the techniques they dispense, are beautifully written. "I think my grandfather knew a lot more about literature and how writers should comport themselves than he let on. He was too genteel: he just did it. [When he was writing his two books, the second of which was *The Salmon and the Dry Fly*, published in 1924] Mother said, 'Oh God, he used to bore us to death with those things. He'd come over every night and read each sentence to us, asking us 'Is that clear?'"

As one would suspect of a successful Wall Street man, LaBranche clearly loved a challenge. His daughter Betty remembers him winning bets from fellow members at his Westchester County country club by beating them around the golf course in matches pitting his fly rod against their irons and putters. He was also a competitive, masterful yachtsman and archer (but not a bow hunter). All this, and he played a mean Jew's harp, too.

In 1912, Theodore Gordon, to whom LaBranche sent feathers from wingshooting expeditions long before there was a High Holt, wrote G. E. M. Skues that LaBranche "is as full of experiments as an egg is full of meat." In a letter now at the American Museum of Fly Fishing, Eugene V. Connett III described a debate around 1921 at The Anglers' Club of New York between LaBranche and Louis Rhead, who is described as, "a conceited little fellow, a very delightful artist, and the worst fly designer that God ever put breath in." The topic to be argued was exact imitation in tying trout flies. "LaBranche chewed poor Rhead into small pieces and spit them out. It was quite cruel and I always felt a bit guilty about having arranged the debate," Connett wrote.

Since Wall Street is rather a labor-intensive place, one wonders where LaBranche found time for all his leisure pursuits. "I never figured out how he did that," says Tony LaBranche. "You can't have your servants do your brokerage deals for you, you know. Yet he had the time to come over and harass my parents over every sentence" in his two books. His grandfather was a product of the nineteenth century, Tony LaBranche believes: self-discipline came naturally and writing was not a chore to a man confident in what he had to say.

But his time was precious. LaBranche would have his chauffeur drive the family up from Pelham on Friday and then follow later that day on a train out of Grand Central. The same train deposited at Hillsdale's modest station up to 100 or so fellow weekend refugees, among them my grandfather, Robert Green, also a devoted angler, who, as a civil engineer, helped LaBranche design dams for his ponds. He, too, had a summer place by a brook in Hillsdale.

The way to High Holt—Route 22 and what is now LaBranche Road—was macadam and dirt. Not too much has changed, judging from the old photos. Hillsdale then, as now, was a small village. One might have seen the burly figure of Don Bell—hard-nosed on the outside, but soft on the inside—walking home to lunch from his law office at the foot of Cold Water Street, instructing his setter, "Heel, Roddy, dammit, heel!" Later, if it was early spring and opening day was near, he would be up on the meadow behind his house, practicing casts. Going up Route 22, one may have passed a yellow convertible driven by a likeable Dutchman sporting a Tam O'Shanter, his wife's red hair blowing in the wind: Boissevain and Millay. LaBranche would be bearing goodies for Millay from the city: tins of Melachrino cigarettes and bootleg gin.

At the tiny hamlet of Green River, the road split at a rock cut, one way to Massachusetts, the other to Austerlitz. ("When you get to Austerlitz, you haven't gotten anywhere, except to the post office and two empty little churches," Millay wrote. Not much has been added in sixty years.) Near the fork was MacCrery's gas station, the owner a hard-drinking former New York City newspaper reporter who became the chief of the Green River Volunteer Fire Department. Up the mountain a bit, on the back road to High Holt, one would pass the department's only piece of equipment, a red pick-up truck with siren and, in back, tools and a portable pump. The rig was donated by LaBranche and parked in one of his outbuildings—no fool, he.

Then, there's the barn, where young Betty LaBranche was dispatched with a big searchlight to flash on anyone spotted up in the woods jacklighting deer. Close by were the kennels. On a nice afternoon, perhaps Colin Macfarlane would be out working the dogs in a hayfield gone fallow, expressing himself no less gruffly than Donald Bell as one of the shorthairs points a sparrow. Then, up the long driveway, past vast lawns well-kept by the Macfarlane kids, is the grand house itself, that testament in stone and wood to George LaBranche's strongly held conviction that there's a right way and a wrong way to do things.

It's all pretty much still there, except for the people. LaBranche died in New York City in 1961 at the age of eighty-six, and High Holt was sold. Among those who are still around is John Macfarlane, who as a boy hand-mowed those lawns so many years ago. I asked him what was George LaBranche like?

"All business," he said. "All business."

# Some Thoughts About Salmon Fly Evolution, Early Metal-Bodied Salmon Flies, (A Bit about Mixed-Wings, Also), and a Yorkshireman

### *by Albert J. Cohen*

Although the artificial fly is an ancient concept we know surprisingly little about the details behind its early evolution. For example, the dressings for the twelve flies included in *The Treatyse of Ffysshynge wyth an Angle* (London: Wynkyn de Worde, 1496) specify certain materials, such as the partridge, but we have no idea which particular feather was used, or what the fly looked like (e.g., Were any of the flies wound hacklewise? Were the wings upright or down-winged?). The same lack of specificity holds true for many artificial fly patterns published as recently as the nineteenth century.[1]

As difficult as it is to be precise about trout flies, the early history of Atlantic salmon flies in angling literature (until the first part of the nineteenth century) is a virtual *terra incognita*, with only obscure or minimal references scattered here and there. Even then, many of the early nineteenth-century references are generally not very enlightening, and, with a few exceptions, lack plates or engravings to guide us.[2] Consequently, salmon fly dressers have a rather difficult time until they reference those books containing fly plates published during the 1840s, 1850s, and 1860s.[3] Despite these, much still remains subject to conjecture and speculation; this is especially true with respect to the development and history of specific salmon fly patterns and styles.

#### "Literally Covered With Glitter"

In three books published recently, Joseph Bates's *The Art of the Atlantic Salmon Fly* (Boston: David R. Godine, 1987), John Buckland and Arthur Oglesby's *A Guide to Salmon Flies* (Ramsbury, England: Crowood Press, 1990), and Mikael Frodin's *Classic Salmon Flies* (Gothenburg, Sweden: A. B. Nordbok, 1991), both the Silver Wilkinson and the Aglaia, thought to have originated during the 1840s, were also believed by such authors to have been the earliest metal-bodied salmon flies.[4] It appears, however, that Bates opted for the Aglaia as the first.[5] All three authors cite, as sources for their information, Edward Fitzgibbon ("Ephemera") and William Henderson, both of whom are discussed below.

Fitzgibbon listed two metal-bodied flies in *Book of the Salmon* (London: Longman, Brown, Green, and Longmans, 1850): the Dunkeld, which calls for a body of gold, and the Aglaia, which calls for a body of silver. To my knowledge, this was the first time these two patterns were mentioned in angling literature. The reasons why present-day authors have not also nominated the Dunkeld for consideration as the earliest metal-bodied salmon fly are not known. Fitzgibbon attributed the Dunkeld to a gentleman connected with the Foreign Office and also mentioned the pattern's effectiveness " . . . at Ballyshannon [the Erne, in Ireland] and in the Sutherlandshire Rivers [Scotland]. . . ." "Dunkeld" is a Scottish place name, thus it is more likely that the pattern originated in Scotland rather than in Ireland. No place of origin was given for the Aglaia, but since Fitzgibbon did much of his salmon fishing in Scotland, it is reasonable to assume that the Aglaia originated there; so precisely because no information other than the dressing is available, to my knowledge, I shall not add to the uncertainty on this matter.[6] Perhaps more answers may be found in *Bell's Life in London*, a weekly periodical to which Fitzgibbon submitted angling articles prior to 1838.

William Henderson, in *My Life as an Angler* (London: published by author, 1876), expanding on an entry dated 1843 from what appears to have been a diary of some sort, remarked: "Some years afterwards the idea of a white-bodied fly was improved upon both by Mr. Greenwell and Mr. P. S. Wilkinson, each inventing a fly whose distinguishing characteristic was a body formed of silver tinsel. . . . "[7] Apparently the Greenwell was, at least initially, dressed as a silver-bodied fly, and later evolved into a fly having a body of blue silk floss. Exactly what Henderson meant by "some years afterwards" in respect to a time frame is unclear, and the dates signifying when these two salmon flies were developed are not revealed by him. Henderson went on to state that ". . . These flies are now acknowledged to be among the best used on the river, if not the very best. By reference to the table of fish weighing 25 lbs. and upwards, it will be seen to some extent what success has been attained with 'the Greenwell' and 'the Wilkinson.'" Although not necessarily conclusive—the table included only the larger fish that were caught—the earliest Greenwell listing is 1862 and that of the Wilkinson is 1863. I am aware of no evidence to support earlier dates for the development of these two salmon flies, and thus their nomination for earliest metal-bodied salmon fly does not appear to be appropriate.

I do not know when the Dusty Miller first appeared, but it may have been early on and within the same general peri-

*The Golden Fly was one of two metal-bodied salmon fly patterns listed in 1806 in* The Driffield Angler *by Alexander Mackintosh, which included instructions for a divided mixed wing. Mackintosh's mixed wing represented an advance over salmon fly dressings previously published. Dressed by the author on a replica blind-eyed salmon hook in the Mackintosh style. Photograph by the author.*

od as the Aglaia and Dunkeld. This pattern, to my knowledge, was first mentioned in Francis Francis's third edition of *A Book on Angling* (London: Longmans, Green, and Company, 1872), but the dressing for it was thought by George Kelson (in *The Salmon Fly* [London: Wymans, 1895]) to be that of a Mr. Jewhurst of Turnbridge, Kent, in the southeast of England. Jewhurst, a fly-dresser during the 1830s at least, also designed the Butcher, which, according to Kelson, was "... known by the name of Moon's fly" until 1838.[8] I have found little else concerning Jewhurst. It may very well be that the Dusty Miller was also developed as early as the Butcher, but I have found no evidence one way or the other.

As one, however, delves further back through the mists of Atlantic salmon fly history, it becomes apparent that the concept of the metal-bodied salmon fly is older, and in fact may be quite a bit older, than the Aglaia or Dunkeld. This should not be very surprising— making metal-bodied flies required no special degree of expertise or technology. In Thomas Tod Stoddart's *Angling Reminiscences* (Edinburgh: The Edinburgh Printing & Publishing Company, 1837), Stoddart described a member of his angling club: "... he had a mortal aversion to the plain brown palmer, one of the most killing lures we are acquainted with, and his partiality to tinsel was somewhat extravagant. We have seen salmon flies of his which were literally covered with glitter. ..." But nothing more was said, and we do not know if the flies referred to were heavily ribbed, metal-bodied, or partially metal-bodied.

Coincidentally, Stoddart, Fitzgibbon, and Henderson all fished in Scotland. Henderson, at least, had met Stoddart, and if they did not know Fitzgibbon directly, it is likely that they had common acquaintances. Henderson also knew and patronized the famous Scottish fly dresser, James Wright of Sprouston (on the Tweed), who, even if he did not invent the patterns, was responsible for the introduction of a number of famous salmon flies, which, among others, included the Durham Ranger, the Doctor, the Silver Doctor, and three or four other metal-bodied patterns.

In 1834, Thomas Medwin edited *The Angler in Wales, or Days and Nights of Sportsmen* (London: Richard Bentley), being the undated papers of what was represented as an unknown author.[9] It is my belief that at least portions of the manuscript were written no earlier than 1828 because Sir Humphrey Davy's *Salmonia* (London: John Murray, 1828) was referred to by the author. It is intriguing that the following pattern for a salmon fly was described: "... I used, I remember, a very gaudy double-winged fly, made of the feathers of the kingfisher (which are very numerous on our river,) and the peacock, *with a thick gold body*. ..." (Italics are mine.) This is a most tempting bit of information. Although the "thick gold body" could very well have been made of gold tinsel, it could just as easily have been made of gold-colored pig's wool, mohair, floss, wool, etc. In any event, should this salmon fly have had a metal body, it appears that it would have been somewhat of an anomaly, since historically Welsh salmon flies generally have not been gaudy. George Hansard, in *Trout & Salmon Fishing in Wales* (London: Longman, Rees, Orme, Brown, Green & Longman, 1834), said, "The flies ordinarily used by the native Welsh angler are very sober in colour. ... They affect to despise the gay and gaudy materials ..."[10]

Although angling literature tells us that metal-bodied salmon flies were utilized during the 1840s (at least the Dunkeld and possibly the Aglaia), perhaps also during the 1820s and 1830s, we are able to turn back the pages of history still further. At the beginning of the nineteenth century, in Yorkshire, England (not very far from Scotland), Alexander Mackintosh listed in *The Driffield Angler* (Gainsborough, England: published by author, 1806) and in *The Modern Fisher, or Driffield Angler* (Derby, England: Henry Mozley, 1821), two salmon fly patterns having metal bodies: one with a gold body and the other with a silver body.[11] The dressings, which included instructions for a divided mixed-wing, are quite interesting, and other than assembling the patterns in a more conventional sequence, are quoted below.

A Sixth, called the Golden Fly

Hook:

... the shank near two inches in length. [Approximately a 7/0 based on the

*Another Mackintosh pattern, dressed by the author. In the Tartan, the ribbing was gold plait and the body was ". . . of four, five, or more different colours, yellow, light blue, green, dark red, orange, and purple [hog's wool], and as many more colours as the fancy may lead the angler to. . . ." Mackintosh was certainly less specific in his tying instructions than was Kelson in the Victorian era. Photograph by the author.*

Bartleet Dublin-Limerick scale in Kelson's *The Salmon Fly.*]

TAG:
[See body]

TAIL:
[None given]

BODY:
. . . the body, broad gold plaiting, with a strong, bold, red [natural brown] cock's hackle, ribbed with a piece of dark green silk; the body [underbody] must be all of one thickness, about the size of a wheat straw, and made with any kind of thick or round silk;

at the same time lapping in [tying in] the hackle, silk, and gold plaiting, take the plaiting and make two laps on the hook at the tail of the fly, then lap the plaiting side by side till you come to the but [sic] of the wings, and fasten; [N.B., It was not uncommon for the wings to be tied in before the body during this time period, with the tips of the wing feathers pointing in the same direction as the tip of the shank—the wings were then bent to the rear of the hook when the body was completed.]

take the green silk and lap it neatly up, about the eighth of an inch slanting from each other, to the wings as before, and fasten; then take the hackle with both the sides on [Mackintosh does not say whether the hackle was doubled or not], and lap it neatly between every lap of the silk, and giving two laps under the wings fasten your hackle;

WINGS:
. . . the wings from the golden pheasant, the common pheasant, the parrot [variety not known; I selected the quill feather with two shades of green for the dressing], the peacock's harl from the tail, the turkey's mottled feather from the tail,

and two blue mottled feathers from the jay's wings, one placed on each side of the wings, with the mottled side downwards; it must be made very soft with your finger and thumb, not breaking the crust of the stem that may lay more flat down to the other part of the wings; it must be lapped on, before you finish the head, by itself;

all the other feathers must be mixed equally alike, and a middling large wing, but not longer than to the end of the hook. . . .

. . . [after the body is completed] then bring the wings forward, pressing them down to the tail of the fly, divide the wings into two equal parts; take your silk, well waxed, and crossing it three or four times between them, make two or three laps behind the wings, in order to throw them forwards, and lay rather flat on the back of the fly than otherwise [N.B., Mackintosh's use of 'forwards' seems rather confusing, but appears to mean 'rearwards,' in that the tips of the wing point towards the bend of the hook.];

HEAD:
. . . finish the head with a very little green mohair . . .[and] . . . the ruddy harl of a peacock's feather. . . .

### A SEVENTH, CALLED THE SILVER FLY

Made as the golden fly. For this fly . . . the shank nearly the same length as the last, also the same wings; the body, silver plaiting, a bit of green silk to rib it with; and light blue [dun??] cock's hackle. . . .

Mackintosh specified "broad gold plaiting" or silver, as the case may be, for the bodies. In referring to *A New English Dictionary on Historical Principles* (Oxford, England: 1909), edited by J. A. H. Murray, the word "plait" means "a contexture of three or more interlaced strands of hair, ribbon, straw, or any cord-like substance." Therefore, I have concluded that broad gold plaiting is identical to woven strands of twist, or the tinsel that is referred to by many of today's salmon-fly dressers as "lace."[12]

## PARALLEL EVOLUTIONS IN TACKLE

When were metal-bodied flies first fished for salmon? Did the metal-bodied fly migrate from Yorkshire to the south of Scotland or, since Mackintosh was originally from and had fished in Scotland, was it there that the concept was developed by Mackintosh or by somebody else and later incorporated into the patterns described by Mackintosh in his books? I do not think that anyone has the answers, and it is entirely possible that we may never know for certain; however, I believe that the period of time during which metal-bodied salmon flies were initially fished can be somewhat narrowed.

First, from a practical viewpoint, fly fishing for salmon could not become feasible (and thus, popularly followed) until the introduction of functional winches (reels), even though we know

that attempts at fly fishing without a running line did occur. The unknown author of *The Gentleman Angler* (London: A. Bettesworth, 1726) gave explicit instructions on how to fly fish for salmon with a " . . . Line, which ought to be two yards longer than your rod . . . ." And almost 100 years later, Captain T. Williamson, in *The Complete Angler's Vade Mecum* (London: Payne and Mackinlay, 1808), observed: "In many places, those who fish for salmon . . . for want of a reel, nail a piece of stick, about five inches long, across the rod, at about a foot above where the lower hand grips it. On this they wind the line forming a figure of eight. It should, however, be understood, that such persons use very strong tackle, and *rarely think of giving more line than happens to be out when the fish takes the fly. . . .*" (Italics are mine.)

Although the winch, which possibly came into use previously, was first discussed in angling literature during the middle of the seventeenth century, it was comparatively rudimentary and most probably served as a storage device by which the line could be shortened or lengthened.[13] It is highly unlikely that a typically rambunctious salmon of any size could have been successfully fought with one of those crude implements. It may very well have been that a good deal of the fly fishing for salmon during this period, such that it was, consisted of fishing for *immature* salmon (including sea trout) and, in the event that a salmon was hooked, the rod and winch (if a winch was used) may have been set aside and the fight continued by hand.[14]

In order for the winch to function properly, a twisted or braided line without knots at frequent intervals became a necessity. Early lines were generally ". . . composed of lengths of twisted horsehair which could not be more than 3 feet long, each length knotted to the next. . . these knots were apt to catch in the rod-rings [line-guides]. . . reels were used by salmon-anglers who used undressed silk line rather than a horse-hair line . . . silk line was prone to tangles, and *too light for casting small baits or fly*—but good for casting heavy baits."[15] (Italics are mine.)

Robert Howlett, in *The Angler's Sure Guide* (London: G. Convers at the Ring, and T. Baliard at the Rising Sun, in Little Britain, 1706), was one of the earliest to discuss another necessary tackle item—line guides. Howlett, in reference to salmon fishing, stated: ". . . the Loops [line-guides] on your top may range with the Loops on your Stock in a straight line . . . otherwise your *Silk-Line* will not run clear."[16] (Italics are mine.) Silk lines of this period were also used for trolling, as mentioned by Robert Nobbes in *The Complete Troller* (London: Tho. Helder at the Angel in Little Britain, 1682).[17] It is thus apparent that until the advent of knotless horsehair lines and improved winches, a good deal of salmon fishing may have included drifting or trolling on lochs, or hurling (harling)—a form of trolling—on rivers; undoubtedly, however, flies were one of the types of lures used in these methods of fishing.[18]

Interestingly, Mackintosh's flies were enormous, ranging from slightly less than two inches (6/0 to 7/0) to 3 inches (10/0) in shank length. Rather than casting these large flies, it is entirely possible that Mackintosh may have engaged in hurling on some of the rivers he mentioned fishing (the Spey, the Dee, the Tay). It occurs to me that perhaps Mackintosh may have wanted his salmon flies to fish deeper than was usual, possibly while hurling, and to accomplish that purpose he may have made the fly's body entirely out of plaiting (lace) in order to add weight. In addition, it would not be particularly surprising had Mackintosh used hooks with extra long shanks; i.e., hooks with a shank length equivalent to a 6/0 or 7/0, but having a correspondingly shorter gap, similar to the "Dee" hooks of the latter part of the nineteenth century. There is no direct evidence of that occurring in Mackintosh's books, but he did specify for one of his patterns to "let the hook be the same size as the former, No. 1, only something shorter in the shank. . . ." This would appear to indicate possibly that hooks were being made with variable shank lengths to suit the fly dresser's purpose, not a very difficult proposition to achieve. Samuel Taylor, in *Angling in All its Branches* (London: T. N. Longman and O. Rees, 1800), also suggested that ". . . if the shanks are too long, there must be some taken [cut?] off, according to the length and size of the fly you intend to make . . . ."

Second, the gold and silver tinsel necessary for metal-bodied flies were, to my knowledge, first discussed in angling literature by Thomas Barker in *The Art of Angling* (London: Oliver Fletcher, 1651) and *Barker's Delight* (London: Richard Marriot, 1657). Barker, who was the earliest known author to give explicit instructions for dressing artificial flies, used gold and silver for ribbing trout flies. He was also the earliest author to discuss, however briefly, flies specifically dressed for salmon fishing: " . . . if you angle for him [the salmon] with a flie (which he will rise at like a trout) the flie must be made of a large hook, which must carry six wings or four at least. . . ." (from Turrell, *Ancient Angling Authors*, pp. 90-91).

At least as early as 1658 tinsel was being used for ribbing salmon fly bodies. Richard Franck in *Northern Memoirs* (London: published by author, 1658, 1694), wrote of ". . . a glittering fly, the body composed of red twisted silk, intermingled with silver and an eye of gold. . . ." and " . . . his dubbing bag contained all sorts of thrums, threads, silks, moccado-ends, silver and gold twist; which are of excellent use to adorn your fly. . . ."[19] James Chetham, in *The Angler's Vade Mecum* (London: Thos. Bassett, 1681), when writing about salmon flies stated, "Silver-twist and Gold-twist, are good to use in Dubbing [presumably ribbing] the bodies." Tinsels of this proximate period were listed by G. M. in *The Young Sportsman's Instructor* (England: sold at the Gold Ring in Little Britain, possibly published about 1706 or 1707) in the materials recommended for fly dressing: " . . . Wire and Twist, Silver Twist, Gold Twist, Silver and Gold Wire . . . and the like. . . ." (from Turrell, *Ancient Angling Authors*, p. 170). I do not know when flat tinsel in angling literature was first discussed, but apparently flat tinsel was made during the eighteenth century by hammering gold or silver wire until it was flat. Richard Brookes, in the sixth edition of *The Art of Angling* (London: W. Loundes, 1785), mentioned "Gold and Silver flatted wire."

## The 18th Century
## Horse-leech and Lob-worms

We know that Mackintosh had been fishing for salmon at least as early as 1765, because he said: " . . . I caught one when angling with the fly at Castle-Menzies in the year 1765, that weighed fifty-four pounds and a half." It would not be cavalier to speculate that as tackle evolved and the winch became more functional, and as fly fishing for salmon became more widespread, some unknown fly fisher or, more likely, fly fishers, probably in more than one geographic area, made metal-bodied salmon flies and found them to be successful, or at least as successful as other types of salmon flies. It may even have been a metal-bodied trout or sea trout fly to which a salmon rose.[20] Or perhaps

a metal-bodied lure was used while spinning or hurling, which resulted in the idea that a metal-bodied salmon fly might prove to be effective.[21]

It is not likely that the nine or ten books published during the latter half of the seventeenth century, and which, at least in part, discussed angling, were necessarily descriptive of all the fishing methods or of all the types of artificial flies generally employed during the period. Undoubtedly most information was passed on from generation to generation and from teacher to student by word of mouth. If, however, one also considers the fifteen or so angling-related books — excluding reprints or subsequent editions — published during the eighteenth century and the relative lack of information covering the topic of salmon flies, one may come to two conclusions.[22] One, that until the end of the eighteenth century there was not much demand for angling literature dealing with salmon fishing; and two, that, at least through the first half of the eighteenth century, and possibly longer in certain regions, fly fishing for salmon may have been comparatively little followed, other than, perhaps, as a relatively localized sport of the landed gentry and military men stationed in those areas where salmon came into the rivers, including, possibly, North America. "Tis very rare," wrote James Saunders in *The Complete Fisherman* (London: W. Mears, etc., 1724), "that the Salmon is fished for with a Fly, or that he will bite at a Fly. . . ." I do not know whether Saunders's perspective on fly fishing for salmon was typical or widely held; but he also added: "the Sport . . . [was] not worth the patience."[23]

Although difficult to ascertain, it would appear that to the extent sport fishing for salmon occurred during the eighteenth century (as opposed to spearing, netting, shooting, etc.), bait fishing was the method more commonly practiced, possibly because heavier terminal tackle was available, thereby reducing or eliminating the necessity for functional running gear. Richard Brookes, in *The Art of Angling* (sixth edition, 1785), devoted considerably more space to baits than he did to the artificial fly (he only described one salmon fly: the Horse-leech). He also advised, "When you make use of the Fly, let your hook be strong and large; but it would be better to have two well-scoured Lob-worms, as they have been most successful in fishing at the Bottom."

In addition to what may have been a rather limited number of salmon fly fishermen, it does not appear that it was customary to routinely report, as matters of consequence, the experimentation with different fly-dressing materials or the development of new fly patterns during this period (proprietary secrecy may have been one contributing motive). A notable exception is the Bowlkers (*The Art of Angling*, Worcester, England: M. Olivers, 1758? and later editions). Most of the fly patterns included in the angling literature of this period were those from *The Treatyse*, as well as Charles Cotton and James Chetham. Also, there may not have been much that was unusual enough to report or record concerning salmon flies. It is possible that, for the most part, they were oversized trout flies made out of locally available components, including gaudy materials. James Saunders dismissed the importance of discrete salmon fly patterns by saying "if he [the salmon] will take a Fly, the same may be used, and in the same manner manag'd as for a Trout."

An unknown commentator ("A Reviewer") made an interesting observation regarding early trout and salmon fishing and related angling literature in *Salmon and Trout Magazine*, no. 48, July 1927:

> . . . before about 1800 there is really not much to indicate that anglers thought more highly of one species [of fish] than another except in so far as it might be bigger and better to eat. *No doubt the full glory of the* Salmonidae *became more apparent as travelling communications got better. They tend to flourish as a race somewhat removed from the busier centres of human life, and there must have been many angling enthusiasts about 1800 who had little chance of getting to know them at all well,* though coarse fish [fish other than salmon, trout, and grayling—not a pejorative term], may have been within their scheme of things. *And it was mostly enthusiasts in the bigger centres in those days who were at all voluble and committed to books.* So trout literature was scanty, and salmon literature as such still scantier before the Nineteenth Century opened. (Italics are mine.)

I am not sure that I necessarily agree with all of these comments, but I think that, with respect to salmon fishing, there is more than a little bit of truth contained therein.

Though there is not much in English angling literature concerning fly fishing for salmon prior to the nineteenth century, we know virtually nothing of seventeenth- or eighteenth-century sport fishing in the rivers of continental Europe. Salmon inhabited many rivers, from Spain and Portugal in the south and west, to Russia in the north and east, and it is almost inconceivable that throughout this vast geographic region, some form of fly fishing for salmon would not have occurred. Spain, for example, had a huge fishery. Anthony Netboy, in *The Melancholy Fate of the Spanish Salmon,* referred to the *Historical Dictionary of the National Fishing Arts* (1791-1795): " . . . 2,000 salmon were then caught daily in the province of Asturias." Spain had, at one time, at least fifty salmon rivers and Enrique Camino, "one of the leading contemporary [twentieth century] authorities on the Spanish salmon," said "it is not venturing too much to suppose that . . . no less than 8,000 to 10,000 fish per day were caught at the end of the eighteenth century" (*Salmon and Trout Magazine,* no. 173, January 1965). Presumably netting and spearing were the modes then commonly practiced, since fly fishing was not mentioned. It would not be unreasonable, I think, to anticipate that future research may disclose the existence of continental fly fishing for salmon during this time period.[24]

Looking then to the history of Britain to see what was transpiring, the eighteenth century began to provide, in general, a more stable political environment than the bloody seventeenth, and by the 1750s, rebellion in Scotland had been extinguished.[25] With domestic *peace* (tranquility would be much too strong a word) came the growth of a larger gentry class, deriving a share of the new wealth and privilege created by the expansion of empire and the beginnings of the Industrial Revolution. With increased communication and improvements in transportation to the salmon-fishing regions — including those in Scotland and Ireland that coincided with advances in tackle—fly fishing for salmon would have become more widely and more commonly practiced.[26] It also seems to me that North America may have played a larger role in the increased early interest in salmon fishing than is generally believed. If one considers that many of the salmon rivers in the British Isles were, in general, strictly preserved, while the North American salmon rivers, which literally teemed with salmon, were for the most part free through the early part of the nineteenth century, then many British military and government men may have initially developed a salmon fishing interest

while in North America.[27]

It is necessary to remember the salmon's rather capricious nature regarding artificial flies—in many instances, especially during the summer, the salmon can be seen, but often cannot be induced to take the fly. There must have been an increase in the diverse theories among fishermen and tackle dealers regarding those patterns of salmon flies which might possibly prove to be more efficacious. Gradually during the last half of the eighteenth century more patterns and various types of salmon flies came into use. One can see this result in the salmon-related angling literature of the early nineteenth century and in the expanded descriptions of salmon fly patterns included in such books. Accordingly then, salmon flies evolved and interest in them increased in response to perceived needs. This was not necessarily because of any revolutionary breakthroughs in knowledge of the salmon's habits or important technical fly-dressing innovations—the metal tinsels, gaudy materials, and exo-tic feathers (more or less) were already available—but in response to a sport which, for a variety of factors, could be practicably pursued.

Therefore, it would not be unreasonable to speculate that metal-bodied salmon flies probably appeared during the latter half of the eighteenth century, which was also the same general time frame during which mixed-wing salmon flies were developed. To my knowledge, Mackintosh's mixed-wings, calling for up to five or six different feathers, represented an advance, at least in complexity, over any salmon fly dressings previously published. Perhaps more answers relating to metal-bodies or mixed-wings lie in books or periodicals which I have not seen or which angling historians have not commented upon, or are in archival documents which have not yet come to light.

In any event, Mackintosh listed dressings for seven salmon flies, including a dressing for the Black Dog and a mixed-wing dressing for the Tartan (the dressing for which is provided at the end of this article).[28] Mackintosh's dressings were more sophisticated than the earlier dressings for salmon flies.[29] Samuel Taylor's *Angling in All its Branches* and Rev. W. B. Daniels's *Rural Sports* (London: Bunny & Gold, fourth [?] edition, 1807) were two such early reference works.[30] Replications of Mackintosh's Black Dog were illustrated in Eric Taverner's *Salmon Fishing* (London: Seeley, Service & Company, 1931) and in Buckland and Oglesby's *A Guide to Salmon Flies*, although the latter replication does not appear to reflect either the two-component wing of heron's wing and turkey's tail intermixed or Mackintosh's divided wing: ". . . bring the wings forward, divide them with the gold twist . . . bringing it three or four times backwards and forwards between the wings, making it appear as much as possible about the head. . . ."

## In Scotland and Beyond

Were Mackintosh's metal-bodied salmon flies evolutionary, including those of his predecessors (if any), or do they represent anomalies? And was Scotland the birthplace of the concept? On the one hand, there is not much to be found on the subject other than the sources mentioned near the beginning of this article. In *Letters on Sporting* (London: J. Cornes, 1815), Richard Lascelles blatantly plagiarized Mackintosh's patterns with respect to salmon flies recommended for Scotland. However, Lascelles, who admitted that he was no great salmon fisher, apparently did not think much of the metal-bodied flies because he modified the dressings for the gold-bodied and silver-bodied flies: " . . . the body should be made of green silk, ribbed with gold [or silver, as the case may be]. . . ." On the other hand, I find it more than somewhat curious that the metal-bodied salmon flies referred to during the first half of the nineteenth century, with the possible exception of the Aglaia for which no origin was given, and those of a short time later—the flies of the Canon Greenwell and P. S. Wilkinson, as well as those of James Wright (e.g., Silver Grey, Silver Doctor, Byrel, and Lion)—all had the same thing in common: Scotland.

E. J. Malone in *Irish Trout and Salmon Flies* (Gerrards Cross, England: Colin Smythe, 1984) said, "The early history of Irish fly-fishing and fly-making is unknown and even this date can only be established by the colour plates of [trout] flies . . . reproduced in *An Angler's Entomology* by J. R. Harris. . ." ([American edition:] Woodstock, Vermont: The Countryman Press, 1952).[31] Although many patterns for gaudy salmon flies were developed in Ireland during the first half of the nineteenth century (if not earlier as well), it appears that in lieu of utilizing metal bodies the Irish employed exotic feathers, bright colors, and multiple toppings to achieve that purpose.[32] Malone quoted William Belton's *The Angler in Ireland* (London: Bentley, 1834) in which, with respect to salmon flies, Belton said: "The Limerick flies are almost always very gaudy and have silk bodies; whereas those tied in Dublin are usually of mohair and fur, and much more sober in their colours, although infinitely more showy than the Scotch salmon flies." Because many of the waters of Ireland flow through or rise in regions which contain huge deposits of peat and are heavily stained, it occurs to me that the same conditions which may have given rise to the gaudy salmon fly (i.e., dark waters) also tended to discourage the use of metal-bodied flies, inasmuch as the acidity of the water would contribute to accelerated tarnishing.

None of the later Irish authors—Blacker, O'Gorman, or Newland—of the 1840s and 1850s, or Fitzgibbon (with respect to Irish rivers), discussed metal-bodied flies, except the previously mentioned use of the Dunkeld at Ballyshannon. The earliest metal-bodied Irish fly that I have been able to find is William Doherty's Judge, which was referred to in Francis's second edition of *A Book on Angling* (1867). Despite numerous Irish patterns that were received from many different Irish fly dressers and recorded by Francis, the Judge was the only listed pattern having a metal body.

Undoubtedly metal-bodied salmon flies were being fished in English rivers near midcentury, but from the time of Mackintosh (and there is no indication as to whether he used his salmon fly patterns solely in Scottish rivers or also in English rivers, although all of his anecdotal references concerning salmon fishing relate to Scotland), the earliest dated mention which I have been able to locate of metal-bodied flies recommended specifically for English rivers is in Francis's fifth edition of *A Book on Angling* (1880). I have not seen the fourth edition of 1876 in which a metal-bodied pattern is given for the river Tyne. Sir Herbert Maxwell, in *Salmon and Sea Trout* (London: George Routledge and Sons, 1898), recalled a day during 1867 when he used the Silver Secretary: "It was probably the first silver-bodied fly that ever swam in that river [the Tyne]."

Concerning Wales, and I am not convinced that the salmon fly "with a thick gold body" referred to in Thomas Medwin's *The Angler in Wales*, was made of tinsel and not some other material; to my knowledge no other dressing for a metal-bodied salmon fly having a Welsh origin appeared in angling literature until Francis's second edition

*"Ascertaining the Weight" from William Scrope,* Days and Nights of Salmon Fishing in the Tweed *(London: John Murray, 1843). From the collection of the author.*

of *A Book on Angling* (1867) listed one such fly which he had obtained from C. Blackwell, Esq., secretary of the Conway Club: ". . . and the patterns may, therefore, be thoroughly relied on. They are all capital general flies, and would kill on many rivers." This fly was designated as No. 5 for the river Conway and is somewhat unusual in that the major component of the wings was "plenty of wood duck slips." I have looked through Moc Morgan's *Fly Patterns for the Rivers & Lakes of Wales* (Llandysul, Wales: Gomer, 1984), but was unable to find any salmon fly having a similar wing.

With respect to the United States, books which discussed angling were first published during the middle part of the nineteenth century, and even then relatively few instances of salmon fishing were recorded. By that time the salmon fisheries of the United States, for all intents, had ceased to exist. Henry William Herbert said in 1850: ". . . it cannot now be pursued by the American angler except [in Canada] at the expense of some not inconsiderable time and trouble."[33] Charles Lanman, writing in 1846, was of a similar opinion:

> . . . the tributaries of the Androscoggin, Kennebec, and Penobscot [in Maine], having all been blocked up with mill-dams, the salmon is only found in the principal estuaries; and as these are large and deep, they are of no value to the angler. . . . So far as our own experience goes, we only know of one river, within the limits of the Union, which affords the angler good salmon fishing, and that is the Aroostook, in Maine. [Lanman, to my knowledge, is the only nineteenth-century writer who extolled the Aroostook.] We have been informed, however, that the regular salmon is taken in many of those rivers, in the northern part of New York, which empty into Lake Ontario and the Upper St. Lawrence, but we are compelled to doubt the truth of the statement. Such may have been the case in former times, but we think it is not so now. . . .[34]

WE MUST, THEREFORE, look to Canada. Although *The Sportsman in Canada* (London: T. C. Newby) was published in 1845, Frederic Tolfrey related from "a few loose leaves of an old journal" his experiences which had taken place during the earlier part of the century (1816 to about 1818). And Colonel James Alexander edited *Salmon Fishing in Canada* (London: Longman, Green, Longman, and Roberts, 1860), which covered experiences occurring over an extended period.[35] Both Tolfrey and Alexander do not, however, list metal-bodied salmon flies among their suggested patterns. Tolfrey's flies were rather somber colored; some of Alexander's could be described as moderately gaudy. In fact, somber colored salmon flies were also recommended by several later authorities, and although a few opted for gaudy flies, no mention was made of metal-bodied ones.[36] Tolfrey referred to the flies he used for salmon as " . . . differing materially from those I had been accustomed to gaze upon as a youth in the several London shops; they [the Canadian flies] were not so gaudy, for he [Tolfrey's friend] abominated everything in the shape of gold or silver twist. . . . "[37] Tolfrey was twenty-two years old in 1816, so one could guess the years of his "youth" as being circa 1810 and probably be accurate to within a year or two.

Robert Barnwell Roosevelt, one of America's early advocates of stringent conservation laws and enforcement, wrote in *Game Fish of the Northern States of America and British Provinces* (New York: Carleton, 1862) that he agreed with Tolfrey's observations: ". . . The flies, contrary to the received opinion in Europe, should be dark . . ." and when Roosevelt referred to Alexander's salmon flies, he said, " . . . some of them are gay flies, gaudier than I should recommend; modest colors suit the

salmon." Apparently Roosevelt distinguished between "the Canadas" (Ontario and Quebec) where Tolfrey and Alexander fished, and New Brunswick where he had his experience because he remarked, " . . . the reader . . . [should] bear in mind that larger and brighter flies are permitted among the rougher waters and heavier fish of the Canadas." Thaddeus Norris, in *The American Angler's Book* (Philadelphia: Porter & Coates, second edition, 1865), also said, "Very few of the flies imported from England and Ireland are suitable for the rivers of New Brunswick, being generally too large and showy for those clear waters. The gaudy Irish flies tied for the Shannon would frighten the Salmon on this side of the Atlantic. . . . "[38]

Notwithstanding Tolfrey's advice (Alexander's book was not published until 1860 and Roosevelt's was published during 1862) some midcentury salmon fishers must have used gaudy salmon flies. Campbell Hardy, in *Sporting Adventures in the New World: or Days and Nights of Moose-Hunting in the Pine Forests of Acadia* (London: Hurst & Blackett, 1855), stated: "Every river in Nova Scotia and New Brunswick, has its particular fly, or series of flies adapted for salmon fishing. Some of these flies, particularly those used in the dark streams of Nova Scotia, would be considered monstrous, both as regarded [sic] their gaudiness and size, by a sportsman of the Old World."[39] We do not know whether or not these flies had metal bodies; however, at some point in this proximate period (1850s to 1870s) it would appear that such salmon fly types *were* being used in North America. The indomitable George Kelson, in an intriguing snippet from *The Fishing Gazette*, September 13, 1884, said, ". . . Some of the coloured samples of the plain [flat tinsel] make splendid bodies . . . . 'Canadian Wonder' . . . of aqua marine [is an] . . . *old and valued specimen* . . . the brilliancy, though, does not survive long, and the dye disappears altogether after a certain amount of work." (Italics are mine.) Unfortunately, George was uncharacteristically terse, for that was all he said.

Metal-bodied flies, however, were being used, possibly as early as the 1860s, for landlocked salmon fishing in Maine. Among the early patterns were the Prouty, having a half-body of silver tinsel and a forward part of black chenille, and the Tomah-Jo, with a silver body. Lorenzo Prouty fished considerably in Grand Lake Stream, Maine, during the 1860s, and Tomah-Joseph was an Indian guide of the Passamaquoddy tribe in Maine who ". . . was well known to the anglers, who back in the 1870s visited Grand Lake Stream. . . . "[40]

Additionally, metal-bodied flies were routinely being used by at least the late 1840s in Canadian waters while fishing for sea trout (sea-run brook trout). Mr. Perley, Her Majesty's Emigration Officer in St. Johns, New Brunswick, sent information to Henry William Herbert that was published in *Fish and Fishing*. Mr. Perley stated: ". . . In the salt water they are caught with the 'Prince Edward's Island Fly' . . . the body of which is of scarlet with gold tinsel, *or of-gold tinsel only*. . . ." Herbert also reported, presumably on the authority of Mr. Perley, since at the time of Herbert's writing he had never fished for sea trout, that "in the fresh water, within the rivers, they [the sea trout] are taken . . . best of all, with a scarlet Ibis fly, *with a gold tinsel body*. . . ."[41] (Italics are mine.) St. Johns, New Brunswick, was a port of entry for many fly fishers who intended to fish for salmon in what was then referred to as the Northeastern British provinces. But to my knowledge no record exists of the use during that time of the Prince Edward's Island Fly or the tinsel-bodied Scarlet Ibis for salmon fishing, and I am not aware of any documentation for the origin of these patterns.

As was true in Britain, salmon and sea trout inhabited many of the same Canadian rivers. The La Val, a stream that flows into the St. Lawrence about sixty miles below the Saguenay, was described by Roosevelt as a superior salmon and trout river. In his "Our Finny Tribes" piece (see endnote 34) Charles Lanman said, "Some of the peculiar charms of fly fishing in this region, are owing to the fact that you are not always sure of the genus of your fish even after you have hooked him, for it may be a forty or twenty pound salmon, and then again it may be a salmon-trout [sea trout], or a four pound specimen of the common trout. . . ." However, Roosevelt had a different perspective: ". . . To the [salmon fisher] . . . the trout . . . is a trial and a nuisance. Abundant and voracious, he often rushes in advance of the lordly salmon, seizes the fly . . . disturbs the pool. . . ." I think it is not unlikely that there were many occasions where sea trout fishermen using the metal-bodied fly caught, to their surprise, the more highly-prized quarry—the salmon. Of course this is speculation, but some of those fly fishers must have concluded that metal-bodied flies might be effective for salmon fishing.

We do know that to the extent that metal-bodied salmon flies were first used in North America, they were British patterns, such as the Silver Doctor or Dusty Miller. On the other hand, it was also probable that there were *homegrown* patterns of such localized or limited interest, that no contemporary author was aware of them, or was sufficiently impressed to feel that comment was advisable. To my knowledge, it wasn't until the latter part of the nine-

## Mackintosh's Tartan

Hook:
. . . let the hook be No. 1, the shank three inches or more in length. . . .[This shank length is equivalent to a $^{10}/_{0}$ in the Dublin-Limerick scale.]

Tag:
[None given]

Tail:
. . . for the fork, or tails, use the dark mottled feather from behind the wild mallard's wings. . . .

Body:
. . . of four, five, or more different colours, yellow, light blue, green, dark red, orange, and purple [hog's wool], and as many more colours as the fancy may lead the angler to. . . .
. . . take your gold plaiting, or twist . . . and work it gradually upwards till you come close up to the . . . wings . . .
then take your ["black and red," furnace or coch-a-bonddu] hackle and work it up neatly between the lappings of gold, till you come close to the but of the wings. . . .

Wings:
. . . the feather for the wings, the darkish brown speckled, from the turkey's tail, and mixed with about twelve harls from the peacock's tail, dividing them that there may be six in each wing; the next feathers for wings to these large flies, are kite, buzzard, bittern, and heron's wings. . . . [49]
. . . then take the feather for the wings, which has lain back [forward, over the end of the shank] all this time, and turn it down towards the tail of the fly . . .

Head:
. . . take a bit of copper-coloured mohair, and twist it thin on your silk, and begin at the end [tip] of the hook and lap it neatly four or five times up to the . . . wings; make two or three nooses close to the wings, and finish the operation with completing the head of the fly.

teenth century that references were made to specific metal-bodied North American salmon fly patterns, such as Sandford White's Night Hawk, which was probably developed during the late 1880s or early 1890s.[42] Another North American fly was John Shields's (the Brookline, Massachusetts tackle maker) Notion, possibly developed during the 1880s, having a half-body of gold tinsel and a forward part of brown dubbing.[43]

## Are "Firsts" Truly Significant?

I believe that there were many more patterns for salmon flies than we have knowledge of, and I do not wish to give the impression that the forgoing discussions of early metal-bodied salmon fly patterns used for fishing in Ireland, England, Wales, and North America were the first of such flies developed. They are the earliest that I was not only able to find evidence of, but also those which I have been able to both satisfactorily date and attribute to their respective geographic regions. There were, for example, other metal-bodied patterns, such as the Silver Popham and the English salmon flies of Dick Routledge for the river Eden, which, for one reason or another, could not satisfy these requirements.[44] I believe, however, that the preceding paragraphs serve properly one of the purposes of this article, which is to give a sense of what was then transpiring: where, when, and possibly by whom. Regretfully, the half dozen or so North American sources from the period prior to 1865 were less than sufficient to establish more than a very limited perspective.[45]

Due to the dearth of recorded history on the subject of early metal-bodied salmon flies, it is difficult to arrive at any conclusions without qualification, except that such types of salmon flies appear to have had relatively limited, if any, popularity until after midcentury. One may safely say, however, that all indications point to Scotland as the place where these flies were initially popularized, and neither the Aglaia, the Wilkinson, nor the Dunkeld were the earliest of such flies. There are, however, many intriguing questions for which we would like to have answers. When or where were the origins of the Dusty Miller, Dunkeld, and Aglaia? When were James Wright's metal-bodied patterns developed? What was the origin of the Canadian Wonder and the time period when it was first fished? What role, if any, did the salmon fly fishers of continental Europe have?

Undeniably a great deal more went on than is reflected in archival angling history, and unquestionably much innovation and experimentation was not recorded; even some of that which has been, especially anectodal recollections, is suspect. I should like to emphasize this because even though much of what I have written is based on careful research, some of my speculations and conclusions, however reasoned, may prove to be incorrect in view of other interpretations or additional information that may be brought to light. I would not be surprised, for example, to find that there were metal-bodied Irish salmon flies prior to, or coincident with, William Doherty's Judge, and though I have seen some indications of that, the provenance is so poor that I am unable to, in all good conscience, rely on such information. It also appears that additional research will be necessary to determine the early connection, if any, between the advent of metal-bodied salmon flies and those used while fishing for sea trout; likewise with regard to North America, the possible connection between metal-bodied flies used while fishing for sea trout (brook trout), landlocked salmon, salmon, and black bass.

Candidly speaking, I have little interest in *firsts* when it comes to artificial flies, nor do I believe that such so-called *discoveries* are worthy, in most instances, of being considered matters of important consequence. Most of the claims or nominations for firsts lack documentation or reliability, for a variety of reasons, and cannot be corroborated satisfactorily.[46] Be that as it may, Alexander Mackintosh's reporting in the early part of the nineteenth century about his involvement with metal-bodied salmon flies (and mixed-wings as well), in addition to his giving specific instructions on how to dress salmon flies, should be regarded as an important milestone in the evolution and history of the Atlantic salmon fly.[47] Also, and the record is quite clear, salmon flies with mixed-wings, as well as gaudy ones, originated at an earlier time than appears to be commonly supposed. Samuel Taylor, at least, probably Mackintosh, and who knows how many countless others, must have fished mixed-wings and gaudy flies prior to the beginning of the nineteenth century.[48]

When I began this article, knowing that some research material was exceedingly nebulous, I had no desire to attempt to *establish history* with respect to the subject matter discussed; to have done so would have been clearly counterproductive and inappropriate. My purpose was to try to clarify some issues and answer some questions. I am afraid, however, that I have succeeded in raising more questions than I have answered. Still, it is desired that this article will be found informative, and that some of the questions posed and conclusions arrived at, however tentatively, will serve to provoke future research and comment.

*I would like to thank Peter J. Caluori of New York City, for the invaluable assistance and information which he has given in connection with the preparation of this article.* *A. J. C.*

## Endnotes

1. In order to better appreciate the difficulties encountered and the thought processes necessary to replicate the artificial flies found in the *Treatyse* or George Scotcher's *The Fly Fisher's Legacy* (Chepstow, England: M. Willett, c. 1810), one should refer to John McDonald's *Quill Gordon* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1972), specifically the chapter entitled "The First Modern Trout Flies," and to Jack Heddon's *Scotcher Notes* (London: Honey Dun Press, 1975), respectively. See also "An Attempt to Reproduce Early Nineteenth-Century Fly Dressings," by Jack Heddon, *The American Fly Fisher*, vol. 2, no. 2, Spring 1975, pp. 10-12.

2. Such early books with illustrations include: Reverend W. B. Daniels's *Rural Sports* (London: Bunny & Gold, 1801 and later editions), containing illustrations of salmon flies (the 1807 edition has a plate with two salmon flies)—some editions have plates which may have been issued in color—(see "The Daniels Fly Plates," by the editors and R. J. W. Coleby, *The American Fly Fisher*, vol. 8., no. 3, Summer 1981, pp. 7-9); G. C. Bainbridge's *Fly-Fisher's Guide* (Liverpool: G. F. Harris's Widow and Brothers, 1816 and later editions) provides a color plate of five salmon flies; T. F. Salter's *The Angler's Guide*, sixth edition (London: Sherwood and Co., 1825), has a plate of three salmon flies (although the first edition was published in 1808, I have not seen the first five editions and do not know if such editions contained this plate); and James A. Rennie's *Alphabet of Scientific Angling* (London: William Orr, 1833 and later editions), provides illustrations of six salmon flies.

3. Such books include: William Blacker, *Art of Angling* (London: published by author, 1842) and *Art of Fly-Making* (London: published by author, 1855); Edward Fitzgibbon, *Book of the Salmon* (London: Longman, Brown, Green, and Longmans, 1850); Hewett Wheatley, *The Rod and Line* (London: Longman, Brown, Green, and Longmans, 1848); Rev. Henry Newland, *The Erne: Its Legends and its Fly-Fishing* (London: Chapman & Hall, 1851); Thomas Tod Stoddart, *The Angler's Companion* (Edinburgh and London: William Blackwood and Sons, 1847 and later editions); William Scrope, *Days and Nights of Salmon Fishing in the Tweed* (London: John Murray, 1843 and later editions); and Francis Francis, *A Book on Angling* (London: Longmans, Green, and Company, 1867 and later editions).

4. William Henderson, who, I believe, was the earliest to make mention of the fly developed by P. S. Wilkinson, referred to it as the "Wilkinson," but did not describe it. I do not know whether suffi-

cient documentation or evidence exists that would permit successful correlation of P. S. Wilkinson's fly with the patterns published during the 1880s and 1890s which were named the "Wilkinson" and "Silver Wilkinson." Accordingly, reference by these three authors to the "Silver Wilkinson" is, with all due respect, more than somewhat questionable; even more so in the context of primacy.

5. In *The Art of the Atlantic Salmon Fly*, Bates said: " . . . until Fitzgibbon wrote about it, I never heard of flat tinsel used for fly bodies. . . . It [the Aglaia] is my candidate for the first metaled-body [sic] fly . . ." (p. 59). And later, ". . . There is a controversy as to whether this [the Silver Wilkinson] was the first one with a silver body. Some opt for the Aglaia . . ." (p. 114). Although Bates *did* refer to flat tinsel throughout this article, unless necessary for descriptive purposes, I shall make no distinction between the types of tinsel, since I consider reference to the metal body answers the fishing *desideratum* and the type of tinsel used is generally a matter of personal preference.

6. Bates, *ibid.*, stated, "Authorities in Ireland have told me that there is oral evidence that Pat McKay was one of the early nineteenth-century fly dressers who knew about this fly . . . I haven't been able to discover the authentic origin . . . " (p. 59).

7. Although anecdotal, F. Harcourt Gooch, writing in *The Field* (December 10, 1910, p. 1115) recalled "many happy memories of old friends who fished the Tweed fifty years ago [c. 1860] . . . the Wilkinson fly . . . [was] introduced about that time by Percy Wilkinson. . . . It was shortly after the battle of Magenta [1859, leading to the unification of Italy during 1860] that a new colour was much in fashion, to which the name of magenta was given, and it is the magenta hackle that distinguishes the Wilkinson from other silver-bodied flies, such as the Silver Doctor and Silver Grey, or flies, of similar character, such as the Greenwell, which about that time began to supersede the old-fashioned turkey wing flies on the Tweed. The Greenwell was the invention of Percy Wilkinson's friendly rival Canon Wm. Greenwell, of Dunham, and the Silver Doctor, a favorite creation of that unsurpassable fly dresser, James Wright of Sprouston.

"All that time the rage for magenta as a colour was so great that it was even adapted to adorn the straw hats of the Durham School eleven in 1861, of which I happened that year to be captain."

8. *The Fishing Gazette*, June 20, 1885, pp. 287-88.

9. See "Selections from *The Angler in Wales, Or The Days and Nights of Sportsmen*," edited by David R. Klausmeyer, *The American Fly Fisher* (vol. 15, no. 2, Fall 1989, pp. 16-21) for selected excerpts and a discussion of the author's possible identity.

10. However Richard Lascelles, in *Letters on Sporting* (London: J. Cornes, 1815), said with regard to salmon flies, ". . . (recollect I am now speaking of North Wales) The wings . . . should be of various colors . . . [including] a little blue, purple, yellow, or gaudy colors of foreign birds . . ." (p. 18). Later he stated ". . . I am no great salmon-fisher myself, but this information comes from those whose unwearied pursuit . . . entitles it to the highest consideration and credit . . . " (p. 25).

11. Publication dates obtained from Westwood and Satchell's *Bibliotheca Piscatoria* (London: W. Satchell, 1883) pp. 137-38.

12. Additionally, Mackintosh discussed elsewhere in his book the use of "gold and silver flatted wire and twisted" (p. 96); it is fairly clear that had Mackintosh wanted to use flat tinsel for the metal bodies of his salmon flies, he would have specified flatted wire. The tinsels of Mackintosh's time were also recorded by Samuel Taylor in *Angling in All its Branches* (London: T. N. Longman and O. Rees, 1800), pp. 245 and 249, as twist and "narrow gold or silver plating." Captain T. Williamson, in *The Complete Angler's Vade Mecum* (London: Payne and Mackinlay, 1808, p. 297) also mentioned plating.

13. The winch was first discussed by Izaak Walton in *The Compleat Angler* (London: Rich Marriot, second edition, 1655), and by Thomas Barker, in *Barker's Delight* (London: Richard Marriot, 1657); both referred to its use in the context of salmon fishing. Modern books dealing with antique reels have not mentioned anything which would cast doubt on this time period, even though the technology to make a winch was available much earlier.

14. James Chetham in *The Angler's Vade Mecum* (London: William Battersby, third edition, 1700, p. 110) said: "The . . . Salmon Smelts (which are about the bigness of a Fresh Herring) are yet lighter and better food [than the Salmon]. . . . [The Salmon] swims in the deep and broad parts of the Water, and usually in the middle, and near the Ground [the bottom], where he's to be fished for. [N.B. This would seem to indicate bait fishing, rather than fly fishing.] But the Salmon Smelts commonly lie in the rough and upper part of a gentle Stream, and in the middle thereof. . . . Young Salmons are very tender Mouthed . . . and are frequently lost by their breaking hold, after hooked. Therefore some persons fasten two Hooks together . . . and on them they make their Fly, that if one Hook break hold, the other Hook may not fail."

15. Charles Chenevix Trench, *A History of Angling* (Chicago: Follett Publishing Company, 1974), p. 65.

16. W. J. Turrell, *Ancient Angling Authors* (London: Gurney and Jackson, 1910), p. 163.

17. John Waller Hills, *A History of Fly Fishing for Trout*, 1921 (reprinted, Rockville Center, New York: Freshet Press, 1971), p. 87.

18. Francis Francis, in *By Lake and River* (London: The Field Office, 1874), described hurling while fishing on the Tay: " . . . it is a very lazy style of fishing . . .you do not even cast the fly . . . in hurling there is no skill whatever required . . . being rowed gently to and fro . . ." (p. 262).

19. Franck supposedly wrote *Northern Memoirs* during 1658, although it was first published in 1694.

20. At the conclusion of the section on salmon flies Mackintosh said, "The same sort of flies are used for Salmon-trout [sea trout], and other fish of the Salmon kind, (at times) only smaller hooks . . ." (p. 110). This reference, I believe, is one of the earliest to discuss the use of metal-bodied sea-trout and trout flies.

21. In *A True Treatise on the Art of Fly Fishing, Trolling, etc.* (London: Simpkin, Marshall, and Company, 1838), by William Shipley, edited by Edward Fitzgibbon, the author, in connection with trolling a minnow, remarked on page 219, ". . . the shanks of the hooks are to be lapped with silver tinsel, in order that every part of them may correspond with the silvery colour of the minnow's belly. . . ."

22. I have only seen a few of the angling books published during the eighteenth century: Richard Brookes's *The Art of Angling* (sixth edition, 1785) and Thomas Shirley's *The Angler's Museum* (London: John Fielding, third edition, 1784). For commentaries on books of that century, however, I have primarily relied on both W. J. Turrell's *Ancient Angling Authors* (which, in my opinion, includes the most comprehensive extant review of such books) and on Eric Taverner, the Lonsdale Library's *Salmon Fishing* (London: Seeley, Service & Company, 1931).

23. Earl Buxton, *Fishing and Shooting* (London: John Murray, 1902), p. 116.

24. Spain has a trout fly-fishing tradition as least as old as that of Britain. See *The American Fly Fisher*, "The Evidence for Early European Angling, I: Basurto's *Dialogo* of 1539," (vol. 11, no. 4, Fall 1984, pp. 2-9), and "Part II: The Mysterious Manuscript of Astorga," (vol. 16, no. 3, Fall 1990, pp. 8-16), both by Richard C. Hoffmann; also "*El Tratadico de la Pesca*—The Little Treatise on Fishing," by Fernando Basurto, translated by Thomas V. Cohen and Richard C. Hoffmann (vol. 11, no. 3, Summer 1984, pp. 8-13). If Spain had early fly fishing for trout, why not for salmon?

25. Amid widespread unrest due to changes in land use allocation and religious intolerance, Britain was tumultuous during this period. Scotland invaded England during 1639, the Civil War followed, and Oliver Cromwell was established as dictator during 1648, succeeded by the Restoration of 1658; the English Revolution by which King James, a Scot, was expelled, occurred during 1688; and during the 1640s came rebellion in Ireland, tantamount to civil war, bringing with it, in addition to confiscation of lands, extensive bloodshed and destruction occurring over many years. The Act of Union between England and Scotland was passed during 1701; however, it was not until 1746 that the last significant Scottish rebellion was brutally suppressed at Culloden Moor. (From *A History of English Speaking Peoples*, Winston Churchill, 1956; reprinted New York: Dorset Press, 1990).

26. T. F. Salter said, "The Salmon is a fish which is seldom taken by the Angler in South Britain. In Ireland and Wales, as well as in North Britain, the art of Angling for Salmon is much practised, and well understood. . . ." (*The Angler's Guide* [sixth edition, 1825], p. 156.)

27. Britain was required to dispatch troops and maintain a military presence in North America. Warfare with the French colonies broke out during 1754 and was concluded in 1760; during 1775 the War of Independence in the English colonies commenced, the Americans invaded Canada, and the Loyalists sought refuge there. After the War there was no doubt that the Americans coveted the rest of eastern British North America. Britain responded by maintaining a military presence, and then came the War of 1812, with all remaining issues not resolved until 1817.

28. This fly may have been an evolutionary predecessor to the Tartan for the River Tay described in Francis, *A Book on Angling* (second edition, 1867), p. 364.

29. In the first edition of *The Art of Angling* Bowlker mentioned the names of two salmon flies (the Dragon Fly and the King's Fisher or Peacock Fly), but the patterns were not described until the seventh edition published during 1826. (Eric Taverner, *Salmon Fishing*, The Lonsdale Library, 1931, pp. 324 and 325.)

30. Samuel Taylor began his fishing experiences in England, " . . . and hearing that there were excellent rivers and anglers in Wales, Scotland, and Ireland, I visited these countries . . . and experienced angling through the various countries and places. . . ." (p. xv). His book was "the result of experience . . . for upwards of forty years" (p. ix). Taylor listed the dressings for three salmon flies, two of which had two-component wings "intermixed," and also went on to state, with respect to salmon flies for the summer, that ". . . your feathers must be intermixed with different gaudy shades, such as golden and other pheasant's, parrot's, peacock's, and in short, of all other birds that are fit for the purpose, either foreign or domestic; and others dyed, including hackles of various colours . . ." (p. 249). Although it is unfortunate that no specific dressings were presented for these gaudy flies, Taylor revealed, more importantly, that the concept of the gaudy mixed-wing was known at least by the 1790s, and possibly earlier.

(Quotes are from Taylor's *Angling in All its Branches.*)

Daniels, for all intents and purposes, borrowed heavily from Samuel Taylor, although he also gave additional patterns for seven salmon flies having one-component wings.

31. Commencing with the Elizabethan wars during the 1560s, many districts in Ireland were more or less in a state of continual unrest or rebellion, especially through the end of the eighteenth century. The Act of Union with Ireland did not occur until the beginning of the nineteenth century and the emancipation of the Catholics was delayed for nearly thirty years afterwards. (*Ireland, A History*, Robert Kee, [Boston, Toronto: Little, Brown & Company], 1980.)

32. Ireland was a major source for the development of the gaudy salmon fly, but I do not believe it was entirely responsible for the concept nor the only geographic area where gaudy flies initially achieved any degree of acceptance. Samuel Taylor did fish in Ireland, as well as all of Great Britain, however, he did not discuss the geographic locations where he used, or first saw the use, of gaudy salmon flies. Mackintosh, in describing the spring salmon fly patterns presented in his books, also said, "These, for the spring season, must be made much larger, but not quite so gaudy as those used in summer . . ." (p. 99). Richard Lascelles in *Letters on Sporting* also described gaudy patterns for use in North Wales.

33. Frank Forester's *Fish and Fishing in the United States and British Provinces of North America* (New York: Stringer & Townsend, second edition, 1850), p. 225.

34. "Our Finny Tribes—American Rivers and Sea-Coasts," by Charles Lanman, *The American Whig Review*, vol. 6, 1847; see *The American Fly Fisher*, vol. 12, no. 2, Spring 1985, pp. 8-13.

35. Several of Charles Lanman's books—*A Tour of the River Saguenay in Lower Canada* (Phildadelphia: Carey and Hart, 1848), *Adventures in the Wilds of the United States and British American Provinces*, vol. II (Philadelphia: John W. Moore, 1856), and *Recollections of Curious Characters and Pleasant Places* (Edinburgh: David Douglas, 1881)—have accounts of salmon fishing, but they add little to our knowledge of salmon fly patterns.

36. John Brown in *The American Angler's Guide* (New York: H. Long & Brother, fourth edition, 1850) offered a tackle-dealer's perspective: "The flies used in this country for taking salmon, do not differ materially from those used in England, Ireland, or Scotland. In the fly season, those of the most gaudy description are generally used . . ." (p. 69). The ten fly patterns offered by Brown, however, did not have metal bodies. In *Fish and Fishing* Henry William Herbert apparently agreed with Brown: "The best [flies] are, in my opinion, combinations of peacock harl; and jay's wing, with body of pink, blue or green silk twined with gold or silver tinsel; there are, however, many other gay and gaudy feathers which are nearly equally killing . . ." (p. 250). It appears from his text, however, that Brown was not personally acquainted with the salmon, and though Herbert was undoubtedly a salmon fisherman when he lived in Britain, there is no indication that he fished for the North American salmon because he did not relate any personal experiences in *Fish and Fishing*. In a veiled reference to Brown, Charles Lanman, in the *American Whig Review* (see endnote 34, above) said, "Our books tell us, that a gaudy fly is commonly the best killer, but our own experience inclines us to the belief, that a large brown or black hackle, or any neatly-made gray fly is much preferable to the finest fancy specimens . . . "(p. 10).

37. The eighteen patterns of salmon flies described by Tolfrey are probably the earliest used in North America for which we have any record. At least some of these patterns may also be among the earliest Irish patterns described. In *The Sportsman in Canada* Tolfrey said, "Some of the patterns are unknown to the generality of London fly-makers . . . [as] my benevolent Instructor [a major in the British military, stationed in Canada] was a native of the Emerald Isle, I might have found some difficulty in procuring the exact patterns, had not [William Blacker been] . . . recommended to me by my friend [the] Major. . . . This emperor of fly-makers . . . has fished every river in Ireland, Scotland, England, and Wales; and on my describing the particular flies, as tied by my old friend the Major, Mr. Blacker told me he knew them well, and had frequently used them on the Bann [in Ireland], and found them very killing . . ." (pp. 253 and 254).

38. Least we forget that the interest in certain patterns of salmon flies has not always had an entirely rational basis, and on more than one occasion has been the object of fads, among Dean Sage's (*The Restigouche and its Salmon Fishing* [Edinburgh: David Douglas, 1888]) favorite flies were the Dusty Miller and the Silver Doctor.

39. Paul Schullery, *American Fly Fishing* ( New York: Nick Lyons Books, 1987) p. 50.

40. Harold Smedley, *Fly Patterns and Their Origins* (Muskegon, Michigan: Westshore Publications, second edition, 1944), pp. 104 and 106.

41. In *American Fly Fishing* Paul Schullery gave an account of the first fly-fishing experience known to have occurred in North America. The year was 1766 and the angler, a Joseph Banks, made the following entry in his diary: "Trout offered good Diversion to an angler biting very well at the artificial Particularly if it has gold about it . . . in the rivers . . . from about two hours before highwater till Ebb . . ." (p. 21). It appears that Banks was fishing for sea trout (brook trout) and it is not unlikely that the artificial was a fly, but could it have had a metal body of gold tinsel, and was it related to the Prince Edward's Island Fly? Without additional information, I have no idea.

42. White was the architect who designed the clubhouse, built during the 1890s, for the Camp Harmony Angling Club (of which Dean Sage was cofounder) on the Restigouche River.

43. This fly is illustrated in Mary Orvis Marbury's *Favorite Flies and Their Histories* (Boston: Charles T. Branford Company, 1892; reprinted, 1955). She said, "It was intended for land-locked salmon, but we hear of it as also successful for salmon . . ." (p. 64).

44. In *The Fishing Gazette* of March 12, 1887, pp. 163-64, Francis Walbran described several of Dick Routledge's salmon flies, including the Grey Doctor and the Eden Fly, as each having a silver-tinsel body; Walbran obtained the patterns from Routledge's daughter subsequent to Routledge's passing (I have been unable to find this date). Francis Francis also gave an account of having fished with Routlege in an article published in *The Field* (London) of July 24, 1875, which article I have not seen; perhaps more information relating to these flies was discussed therein.

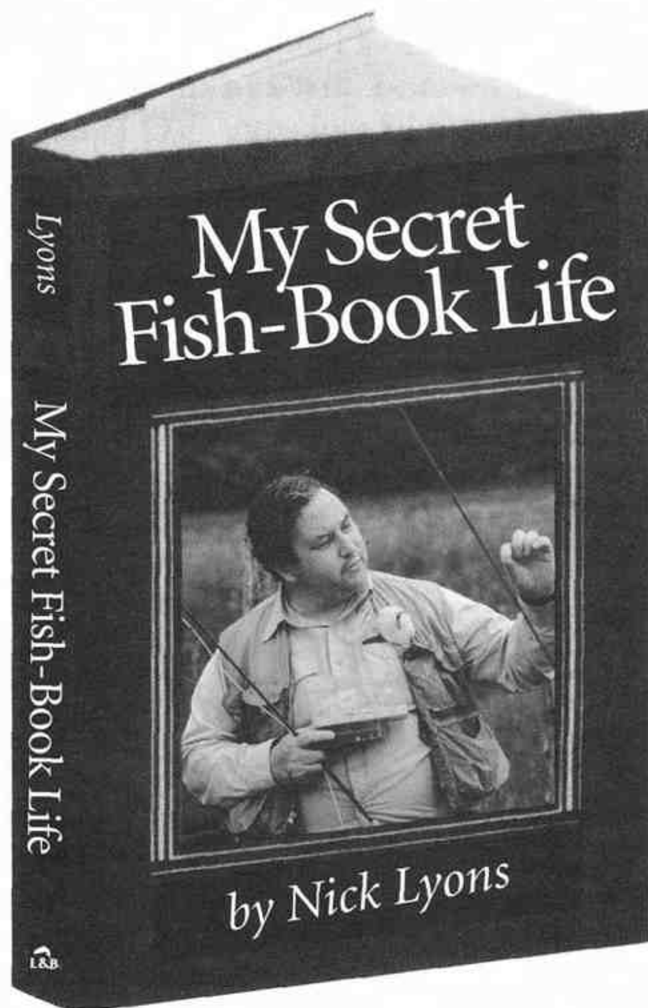
45. Francis Francis, in his six editions of *A Book on Angling* (1865 to 1885), serves as a very good source for the British Isles, since, in his capacity as fishing editor (and later editor) of *The Field*, he traveled extensively and obtained salmon flies from many sources and numerous different fly dressers throughout the Kingdom. If, along with Francis, one considers the number of salmon fly patterns described by William Blacker in *The Art of Fly Making*, and also by Edward Fitzgibbon in his *Book of the Salmon*, a fairly clear picture as to the regional popularity of certain types of salmon flies begins to emerge.

46. This situation should be of little surprise. There has always been much controversy over who first developed specific patterns of artificial flies, even regarding some of those which were introduced as recently as the 1960s and 1970s.

47. I do not know whether or not Mackintosh was the earliest in angling literature to discuss metal-bodied salmon flies. Dean Sage, in *The Restigouche and its Salmon Fishing* (Goshen, Connecticut: The Angler's and Shooter's Press, 1888; reprinted 1973), referred to *The Angler's Pocket Book* (London: H. K. Causton, third edition, 1805), in which the anonymous author recommended " . . . fishing with a large, gaudy, artificial fly, its body brilliant with gold or silver. . . ." It is possible that the author may have been referring to metal-bodied salmon flies, but, since I have not seen this book, there is nothing further I can add. Interestingly, the author also suggested decorating the fly: "a real butterfly on the point of the hook improves the bait," p. 100.

48. In Mikael Frodin's interesting book, *Classic Salmon Flies* (Gothenburg, Sweden: A. B. Nordbok, 1991), he refers to the gaudy fly appearing in George Bainbridge's *Fly-Fisher's Guide* (1816), and makes some comments which are in need of clarification: "The reason I include this fly is that the Gaudy Fly is of great historical importance . . . It is one of the very first salmon flies which were truly colourful . . ." (p. 84). I do not think that anyone can make the latter statement, simply because we do not know when gaudy flies for salmon first evolved. Although we do not know when Bainbridge developed the gaudy fly, or if it had been publicized previous to his book, Samuel Taylor, Alexander Mackintosh, Richard Lascelles, and the unknown author of *The Angler's Pocket Book, supra*, all of whom referred to or described gaudy flies, preceded Bainbridge. Also, London tackle-dealers were selling gaudy salmon flies before *The Fly-Fisher's Guide* was published (see Frederic Tolfrey). Frodin also stated: "In the early nineteenth century almost all salmon flies were imitations of butterflies, dragon flies and other insects. . . . When dyed materials were used, they were not dyed in the bright colours which became popular at a later date, but in a variety of shades" (p. 84). With all due respect, both of these comments are incorrect historically; several authors mentioned or described salmon flies made during this period which were neither insect imitations nor sober colored. Although the provenance leaves something to be desired, one of the earliest patterns we have knowledge of had dyed orange and red pig's wool and mohair in the body. Eric Taverner, in *Salmon Fishing*, said: "The earliest example of a salmon-fly I could find is said to have been dressed in 1775 . . ." (p. 325).

49. W. H. Maxwell, in *The Field Book: or Sports and Pastimes of the British Isles* (London: W. Tweedie, 1833), described the common buzzard: "A . . . species of hawk about twenty inches in length, and in breadth four feet and a half . . . the upper parts of the body are of a dusky brown colour; the wings and tail are marked with bars of a darker hue. . . . But birds of this species are subject to a greater variations than most other birds, and scarcely two are alike; some are entirely white . . . and the others again are mottled brown and white" (pp. 78 and 79). Also described were the honey buzzard and the moor buzzard, both having not dissimilar coloration. Maxwell also described one species of kite with quills of dark brown. Accordingly, I have selected as alternative materials for the buzzard and kite components of the wing feathers in this dressing, mottled turkey tail and dark cinnamon turkey tail, respectively, and, additionally, I have used golden pheasant side tails and gray turkey in lieu of bittern and heron, respectively.




*NICK LYONS IS ARGUABLY the single most important figure in the field of outdoor publishing since Eugene V. Connett, although he will blush and sputter to be so touted. In the process of defining and revitalizing modern fly-fishing book publishing over the past twenty years, Nick has rescued, along the way, languishing authors/books abandoned by larger publishing houses, promoted obscure authors (Sparse Grey Hackle, my grandfather, was one), encouraged budding writers, and with his backlist eventually provided a veritable who's who of fly fishing to the public. Look at the works cited in the following article and see for yourself how seminal his influence has been—he has directly or indirectly touched nearly every reading fly fisher in America through the legion of books he has published or republished. Here, from the horse's mouth, is how Nick Lyons put his remarkable publishing house together.*

*MARGOT PAGE*

IN 1968 I HAD BEEN TEACHING literature at Hunter College for seven years. During four of those years I had also worked as an editor at Crown Publishers in Manhattan. Both were full-time jobs, but their salaries still did not allow a husband and father of four to pay his bills in New York City. So in those few years I would, in addition, write a scholarly book on a Quietist American poet; publish essays on Thomas Nashe, Tolstoy, and Kafka; and ghostwrite four books: one about the mother of a president, one for a feminist, another for a veterinarian, and one for an adopted woman who had, after twenty years of searching, found her natural parents. I *also* fished with a passion—had, in fact, lost my heart to fly fishing, and I had just begun to write about my affliction.

My first published angling stories were about a trout that I had gigged when I was eight years old and a brilliant maverick angler I called Hawkes. They were both published in *Field & Stream* (in 1968 and 1969), and they announced to me, after a lot of dry academic writing, the presence of an earthy personal voice I knew at once would drive out all other voices. I found I loved to write about fly fishing, and I still marvel that you can get paid for something you love so much.

Hawkes was Frank Mele, a new friend I'd made in Woodstock, New York, and he suggested to me some time in the winter of 1968 that I reprint *Art Flick's Streamside Guide to Naturals and Their Imitations.* Frank knew Art and got me his winter address in Jensen Beach, Florida. I promptly hunted up a copy of that little gem and proposed it to Crown. The editor-in-chief said "no"; Crown had once published a fishing book and it had not sold. Besides, the guide was twenty years old and had sold only modestly when it was first published by Putnam.

Dave Kashner, then a buyer for the

Orvis Company, was decisive in my republication of the Flick; he told me in writing that he thought Orvis could sell several thousand copies within the first year (they sold far more than that eventually). Crown kept calling Orvis "Orbis" (the name of a book producer with whom they dealt), but they always listened to numbers — and I think they knew that I had grown restless with books on baseball, medical malpractice, and macramé and had to be thrown a bone . . . or at least a fly. So they acquiesced, though the editor-in-chief resisted my pleas for a water-resistant binding with a counter-proposal that we bind the streamside guide in lead.

The little guide did not sink: we sold 7,500 by Christmas (1969) and another 5,000 the next spring. Crown was impressed. They asked me to find more such books. They began to call Orvis "Orvis." They encouraged me to put together an anthology, which I did, entitled *Fisherman's Bounty* (1970), and as a result I was suddenly in contact with a dozen fine writers about the sport, including Vince Marinaro, whose *A Modern Dry-Fly Code* (at Mele's strong insistence) I republished in 1971. I also republished Preston Jennings's *A Book of Trout Flies* in 1970 and the next year published, at Art Flick's suggestion, *Selective Trout*, a new book by a couple of young whizzes (Doug Swisher and Carl Richards) he'd met recently. The books did well. Marinaro's, which had sold fewer than 700 copies when it was first published in 1950 by Putnam, sold more than 15,000 copies; the Jennings, whose minimal sales had disappointed that great author sorely, sold out four printings; *Selective Trout* was an instant success and, over the past twenty years has sold more than 150,000 copies. But my greatest pleasure was to persuade Sparse Grey Hackle to expand *Fishless Days,* a book privately printed by The Anglers' Club of New York, into *Fishless Days, Angling Nights.* The editor-in-chief almost let that big one get away, too. I proposed it to him, Sparse agreed to the terms, and then Crown sat on the contract for six months. Sparse, with a backbone and pride like steel, balked and demanded his manuscript back. I returned it but kept cajoling him. He finally relented and I published the book in 1971 with immense love for the great old fellow and for his prose. What fun we had — and what good friends we became.

At first I worked alone at Crown — selecting, editing, even marketing the books; my one assistant, Jerry Hoffnagle, came in 1973. Crown was a freewheeling place then, with some warts but also with a great capacity to let an editor play out his hand in his own way. It seemed axiomatic to me that the single best place to sell fly-fishing books was a tackle shop, few of which carried books then, so I began to clip ads, accumulate the addresses of stores across the country one by one, and file the names on 3-by-5 index cards. Then I'd send each a flyer, a personal letter (I still use a manual typewriter and do all my own correspondence), and some follow-up material. I did this regularly, every day, even obsessively. It was not especially clever of me; but I was a bulldog about it and we soon had some 1,000 new accounts in the field. I'm still a bit bats about index cards; everyone at Lyons & Burford collects names. You can publish the best fly-fishing books of all time, but if they are not sold, the business will not survive and such publication cannot continue.

Those were exciting years. I felt that Jerry, fresh from Pennsylvania State, and I were breaking new territory constantly, and that getting more good fly-fishing books out and into the hands of fly fishers was a thing of true value. I can remember hand-carrying books to Abercrombie & Fitch at 45th Street and Madison Avenue, and to Jim Deren's crowded Angler's Roost in the Chrysler Building; arranging signings for Sparse at William Mills and at Trout Unlimited banquets; devising posters; writing (with Jerry) a "Sportsmen's Classics Newsletter" that got mailed to everyone we could think of. We were unsystematic, tenacious, self-mocking (we once included some choice passages from authors we published, such as Charles Ritz's odd maxim, "Never fish downstream from a Belgian"), hugely enthusiastic, evangelical, and passionate about everything we did. People who were more intimately connected to their sport, through a vehicle like the broad literature of fly fishing, would do more to protect it — its ethics, its best practices, the conservation of the resources without which it cannot be practiced. I still believe these principles to be true.

Then, in the mid-1970s, there was a sudden glut of fly-fishing books, a nasty bit of cutthroat discounting, a flatness to the market, and, for me, a sharp rebuke from Hunter College, which demanded that I stop holding two full-time jobs, though my teaching (I argued) was only better for my knowledge of the practical world of publishing. I was also told at that time that my fish-book writing was an embarrassment to the teaching profession and that, if I continued it, I would never be promoted to full professor. In response, I wrote more shaggy fish stories than ever, stopped all scholarly writing, and, when a lady fly fisher became chairperson of the English Department, I was eventually made a full professor.

I had by this time published or republished in Crown's "Sportsmen's Classics" series some fifty books, most on fly fishing, including such old and new titles as Roderick Haig-Brown's seasons series, his *Return to the River* (1974) and *A River Never Sleeps* (1974); Howard Walden's two fine books in one volume; Marinaro's new *In the Ring of the Rise* (1976); Robert Traver's warm *Trout Magic* (1974); Lefty Kreh's pioneering *Fly Fishing in Salt Water* (1974); my friend Mike Migel's *Stream Conservation Handbook* (1974); a second book by Doug Swisher and Carl Richards (1975); some important fly-tying books, such as Art Flick's *Master Fly-Tying Guide* (1973) and Eric Leiser's excellent *Fly-Tying Materials* (1973); and a raft of others. Back then I liked, and still do, the concept of mixing reprinted older books of true importance with the best new books I could find. Then, in 1976, Jerry went to Stackpole and I, for a number of reasons — including Crown's shady and shabby treatment of authors — quit the publishing world, I thought forever. Crown did not seem disappointed when I left. They had embarked on a fast track, with million-dollar advances to best-selling authors, and my fly-fishing books were mere minnows. (In 1987, that fast track led off a cliff — and they are now a division of a much larger firm.) I'd had a good run, and I was writing more fishing essays myself then, including my "Seasonable Angler" column for *Fly Fisherman* magazine, and I was still very much devoted to my teaching. Fish-book publishing had been a kind of secret life, after all.

Timothy Benn, a publisher and fly fisher in England, came to me in 1978 and asked if I'd start a subsidiary for him in the American colonies, to be called Nick Lyons Books, with a strong emphasis on fly fishing and other outdoor leisure sports. He wanted me to function as a packager — a producer of books that were sold, in their entire edition, to another publisher who then handled all sales, promotion, and distribution. He picked Doubleday as our publishing partner, and between 1978 and 1980, working out of my living room with the help of several free-

*Some of the material archived in the American Museum of Fly Fishing that follows the evolution of Nick Lyons in publishing includes the first issue of Crown's "Sportsmen's Classics Newsletter," September 1973 (mailed "to everyone we could think of"); a press release for the 1971 publication of* Fishless Days, Angling Nights *by Sparse Grey Hackle; Crown's 1975 Sportsmen's Classics catalog, and the Spring 1992 catalog of Lyons & Burford, Publishers.*

lancers, I produced eight books for them and engineered their purchase of John Goddard and Brian Clark's *The Trout and the Fly* (1980) and Jackie Wakeford's *Fly-Tying Techniques* (1980). Both were produced by Timothy's staff in England and both are excellent books that sold very well over here. My first book under this arrangement was William Humphrey's *My Moby Dick* (1978) and I'm still hugely proud to have published it.

The Doubleday relationship matured and then rotted a bit, and I began to feel increasingly disembodied from the process, as I produced the books and then lost all control of them to people for whom they might have been widgets or pickles. It was less and less fun.

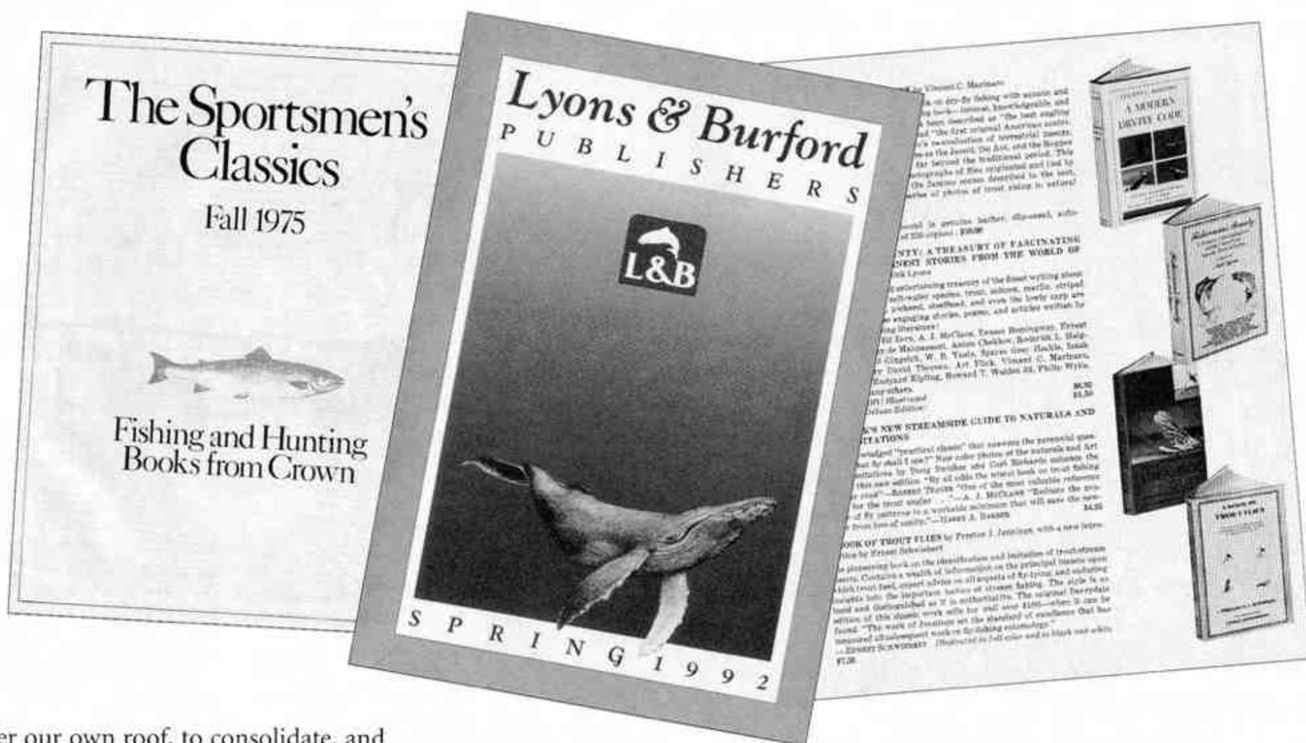
But the Benn Group would not budge on the issue of packaging and Doubleday clearly did not want either the more technical fly-fishing books (such as Gary LaFontaine's *Caddisflies)* or as many books as I now wanted to publish. In fact, I had begun to publish more and more books outside of the fly-fishing field: in other outdoor leisure sports, natural history, art, and adventure. I went to Winchester Press with the fishing books (they published *Caddisflies* in 1981), to Schocken and W. W. Norton with those on other subjects. My fish-book life was growing more scattered, untidier and untidier.

I had an office now—rather, I sublet a room from another small publisher—and I hired Peter Burford (whom I'd known since he was a senior at Princeton) away from Crown to help. He proved a brilliant second member of the staff and, seven years ago, he became a partner of inestimable value.

Soon after Peter came to work with me, Timothy Benn was summarily discharged in 1984 as chairman of the board of his hundred-year-old family firm: Benn Brothers was taken over by a company with the awful name of Extel. We were told that the new British owners had no interest in books, especially not fly-fishing books, and that we would be sold off if we did not offer enough for the business ourselves. Since I was then the principal asset, I said I refused to be sold; and since I did not think I should pay much for myself, we bid what the Benn negotiator called "two peanuts." Six months later they agreed to the same offer, we raised a little money from seven fly-fishing friends (enough to buy the business and keep us afloat for a few months), put up some cash ourselves, and had a nice little untidy business, whose books were scattered around the industry and whose sole occupation was still packaging books for others.

Though we did some good books during those early years of independence from 1984 to 1986, the work was perpetually frustrating. At first we continued to package books out of financial necessity. Our staff was miniscule and cramped. (The present editor of *The American Fly Fisher* worked for Nick Lyons Books then, and will remember our 500 square feet on 26th and Fifth, our shared office with a lunatic whose greatest joy was to buy a carload of impounded Maharini furniture, and who once caused me to send the small staff home when he went fully off the wall and had a shotgun available to him.) We next moved to quarters five streets south that were three times as large as we needed– and nearly went bankrupt. For the first time in my publishing life we lost—with great pain—a whole slew of fine first authors; we contracted for books that no other publisher would buy from us; and increasingly I found that I no longer had the energy to edit and teach and write full-time.

Within the last five years, Peter and I have done those things necessary to give us the independence we need to publish as we think best—with maximum freedom. We have taken great risks to bring all the functions of a publishing house




under our own roof, to consolidate, and focus what we do. We now sign on, produce, sell, and distribute all our own books.

In the process we bought back all the books we'd packaged for Doubleday; we bought all stock and rights to the books I'd edited at Crown that were still viable; after some bitter disputes with Winchester, we made a bid for all the books we'd packaged for them and it was eventually accepted. I cannot think of another publishing firm that has bought back its packaged books in this way. And we hired an outside sales manager for several years, an experienced hand who plugged us into five groups of book sales representatives; we set up a surrogate group of sales reps just for the sporting field; we installed a computer, hired a biller, began to build our own lists, and gradually learned how to market our own books. We changed the name of the business to Lyons & Burford, Publishers, to reflect Peter's status as a full partner. I retired from teaching after twenty-six years to devote my best energies to publishing. And we began to increase the number of books we published in fields other than fly fishing to reduce our dependency on that one field, however deeply loved. I still acquire and edit most of the fly-fishing titles, and many of the principles I began with in 1968 still obtain.

Art Flick's little guide continues to sell a thousand copies a year; a new stream identification guide—Dick Pobst's *Trout Stream Insects* (1991) published by Lyons & Burford with the grace of the new technologies in full color—has not supplanted it. Doug Swisher and Carl Richards did *Emergers* with us in 1991, and we have published revisions of some of the old "Sportsmen's Classics" books from Crown, including *Fly Fishing in Salt Water* (1986) and *Practical Fishing Knots* (1991). New authors, such as Tom Rosenbauer, Dave Whitlock, and Dick Talleur, bring great practical experience to their books—and they have sold very well. Some authors I edited twenty years ago have moved on to what they consider larger and better houses, for much larger advances than we offer. We have published distinguished treasuries including Ed Zern's *Hunting and Fishing from "A" to Zern* and revisions of classic titles such as Lee Wulff's *The Atlantic Salmon* (1982). About 100 of our 225 books are on matters piscatorial; some eighty-five, more than any publishing house has ever had in print at one time, are on fly fishing.

In recent years the market has changed and matured. Many reviewers have—thankfully—become more demanding and more books celebrating the pictorial pleasures of fly fishing are being published (though not by us). Our "market share" has surely diminished, though we're publishing more fly-fishing books than ever. Several aggressive wholesalers handle an increasing percentage of the book business we do with tackle shops; more publishers are "trying on" a fly-fishing book or two, to get in on a "hot" field. Many authors have decided to self-publish. Several "continuity" programs are in the planning stages for books in the field.

Fly-fishing books will surely become a smaller and smaller part of our business as we grow—though we'll always try to find those we can't resist, that *ought* to be published.

I don't think I'll ever again feel the excitement I felt when I signed up Art Flick's book and saw it prepare to take wing, or the day Sparse dropped by, placed his manuscript back on my desk, and said, "All right, Bub, you can publish it—but it won't sell 1,000 copies" (he was, for once, dead wrong: we sold 13,000); or the day we arranged to get all of our sporting books back from Winchester Press and consolidated our independence.

I never wanted to be a latter-day Derrydale Press, and we're not at all like that distinguished sporting-book house; we are not as exclusive, not focused only on sport, and we do little that compares with Eugene V. Connett's brilliant bookmaking. But we do good books. We're a small, fiercely independent house, financially solid, increasingly diverse, full of surprises (I think), and always anxious to publish books better.

In twenty years, or in fifty or 100, it will be easier to tell if we've also published important and lasting books on fly fishing.

THE AMERICAN MUSEUM of Fly Fishing is proud to house the artifacts of such prominent American figures as President John Quincy Adams, President Jimmy and First Lady Rosalynn Carter, President Grover Cleveland, President and General Dwight D. Eisenhower, President Herbert Hoover, General George S. Patton, Jr., and statesman Daniel Webster. This personal fishing memorabilia gives us a brief glimpse into the limited private lives of those who gave their public life to their country. One can only imagine the succor a tumbling, pure trout stream gave to generals and presidents during times of war and national crisis. Not to mention election years.

Shown from the upper left corner is the optimistically large bamboo and leather creel, with nickle-plated brass fittings, belonging to George S. Patton, Jr., General, U.S. Army, which was donated to the Museum by his great-nephew John Reed in 1983.

Seventy-one of President Grover Cleveland's salmon flies are housed in a three-tiered metal fly box, donated to the Museum in 1986 by Mrs. Elizabeth Browne.

President Herbert Hoover's rush creel with leather trim was donated, along with other fly-fishing gear, by his son, Herbert Hoover Jr., in 1968.

President John Quincy Adams's handsome forest green leather fly book with geometric threaded fly envelopes (hand-stitched) and scalloped finishing trim, was loaned to the Museum in 1987 by Trustee James Taylor.

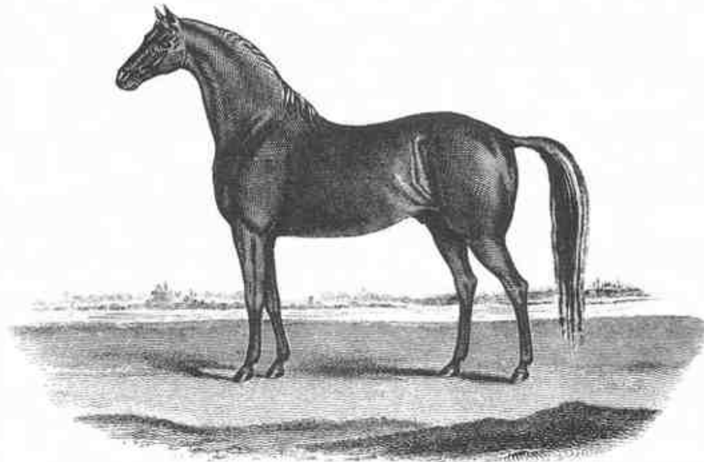
At center is the Orvis 8 ½-foot impregnated bamboo two-piece "Manchester" rod and the St. George Hardy reel that belonged to President and General Dwight D. Eisenhower, inscribed: "General Dwight D. Eisenhower as presented by Mamie Dowd Eisenhower." Eisenhower fly fished all around the country, but particularly loved the trout streams of Colorado. The rod and reel were donated by Mamie Eisenhower in 1969.

The painted ash rod owned by statesman Daniel Webster (1782-1852) was made by B. D. Welch in 1847. It was acquired for the Musem by Alvin Macauley from Samuel Mitchell in 1979. The cracked leather case and the absent tip, lost long ago, attest to the age of this set; the rod is inscribed in delicate spidery handwriting: "Daniel Webster Marshfield Mass." and signed by "B. D. Welch Maker NY."

President Jimmy and First Lady Rosalynn Carter donated their two Fenwick two-piece 9-foot for 5-weight graphite rods in 1991. The Carters continue to fly fish enthusiastically.



Photograph by Cook Neilson



# A Trout by a Hair

## *by Norm Crisp*

In June of 1991 a business trip took me to Chicago, not far from where my friend Charlie lives in Wisconsin. Of course I went to visit him, but also to brag of fishing exploits and enjoy an evening of angling on one of his favorite local streams, Black Earth Creek. While we were walking back to the car, Charlie picked some horsehairs off a pasture fence. With a twinkle in his eye he asked, "You think you could land a trout on one of these? That's how old Izaak had to do it." Our good-natured rivalry wouldn't let me pass up the challenge. I told him, "Not only could I catch a trout, but I could catch a big trout." After a great deal of discussion as to what was an acceptable definition of "big," we settled on fifteen inches or more as the critical measurement.

Back home in Prairie Village, Kansas, with the horsehairs Charlie found, I had some second thoughts about meeting the challenge. Pulling one of the hairs, and seeing how easily it snapped, told me that even though they had a diameter of about .008 inches, they weren't typical 3X to 4X tippet material with a breaking strength of 7 or 8 pounds. That night I started rereading a copy of *The Compleat Angler* a friend had given me. I found the information I needed in Chapter XXI: "Direction for the making of a Line, and for the coloring of both Rod and Line."

Illustration from *American Turf Register and Sporting Magazine*, vol. IV, April 1833.

According to Izaak, hairs from a light-colored horse were the best if you could find ones that weren't flat and uneven. So difficult were they to find, however, that Izaak cautioned, "If you get a lock of right, round, clear, glass-color hair, make much of it." He pronounced the second best as black hairs. When I asked one of my coworkers who has horses if I could have some of their tail hairs, he looked at me strangely but said I was welcome to pluck all I wanted. A Saturday in the country gave me a lot of potential tippets.

With the dining room table cleared of everything, I started examining my booty in search of a "glass-color hair that I could make much of" to use in meeting my goal. Izaak was right. My coworker now had a horse with a sparse tail and I didn't have a single glass-colored tippet. They were all flat, uneven, and broke under the slightest tension. I decided I'd always liked black tippets anyway.

Armed with a sandwich bag full of black horsehairs, my 4-weight rod, and some "sponge spiders," I headed for my favorite local farm pond for some experimentation on bluegills. On my third cast, a palm-sized bluegill inhaled the spider, leaving with it and half of my hair tippet. That was my first lesson. I hadn't checked the black hairs for, as Izaak put it, "galls and scabbyness." Close examination of the other hairs showed that they all had an area of "scabbyness" somewhere along the length of the hair. I could find it by grasping each end of the hair between my thumbs and forefingers and giving a quick jerk or two—the hair would inevitably break at the scab. Generally the break left me with about a 15- to 18-inch length of usable tippet. My second lesson that evening was about the brittleness of horsehair and the difficulty in tying knots that wouldn't break when I tightened them up. I headed home after dark a little disappointed. I hadn't caught any fish and it looked like a "big" trout might be out of the question.

About a week after the bluegill experiment, the answer to the brittle hair problem revealed itself to me while I was taking my morning shower. Old Izaak had said, "first let your hair be clean washed." He had been right about light-colored hairs and scabbyness; so why wouldn't he be right about cleanliness? I'd give it a try. That evening I shampooed the hairs and soaked them in conditioner. This "salon treatment" really helped to soften the hairs, but they still often parted at the knots. After attempting several combinations, I settled on a "Surgeon's Knot" for the leader-to-hair connection and a loose "Duncan's Loop" for the hair-to-fly connection. Armed with this information about the best knots and twenty of my finest hand-picked and shampooed tippets, I was prepared to head to the Encampment River in southern Wy-

oming for a week of friendship and fishing with Charlie. The possibility of catching a trout in the way of a "Compleat Angler" seemed distinct.

It is an 800-mile drive from the Kansas City area to the Bureau of Land Management campground on the Encampment River where Charlie and I traditionally fish together. The trout in this section of the Encampment River are very civilized; they don't consider rising to even the best presentation until at least 8:30 A.M. when the sun has started to clear the canyon rim. The social grace of Encampment River trout allowed us plenty of time to drink coffee and prepare for the upcoming day's fishing. With all the fanfare I could muster, I rigged out my rod and ceremoniously chose my finest tippet. Besides being the best fisherman I know, Charlie is also a good fly tyer; it only seemed fitting that one of Charlie's flies should adorn the end of my horsehair. The morning tent check for newly emerged insects that cluster on the rain fly indicated a dark brown, mottled caddis, about size 16, might be the right choice. Charlie's "Woodchuck Caddis" would make a good match.

With high expectations Charlie and I started up the encampment. On the first series of passes Charlie connected with a brown of about twelve inches. The day was starting out right. There was nothing for me in the first pool, but on the first drift across the second hole, a brown made a wild splashing rise. Trying to balance my strike with a force that would set the hook, but not break the fish off at either the fly-to-hair or hair-to-leader knots, I raised my rod tip. The knots held and my first Horsehair Trout and I did battle. I was so nervous about the knots that I played him like he was the one big fish that comes along during each trip. Slowly I worked him to me and gently slid the net under him. I had caught a trout using a horsehair! As nonchalantly as I possibly could, I held my 11-inch treasure up for Charlie to see before I slipped him back into the river.

A breakfast of brookies, pan fried in a little wild sage, eggs over easy, and a cup of strong camp coffee was a great way to start the next day. Warming myself in the first rays of sun that had topped the rim of the canyon, I finished my coffee and decided to hike up the river to a spot near where Hog Park Creek, one of the Encampment's tributaries, joins the river. The area I wanted to fish is canyon country; in this section the Encampment rushes through a steep-walled flume, but in a few places the flume gives way to less rugged conditions on one bank or the other. In these areas the velocity slows a hair and the river gets a little bit tamer. One of these oases, in particular, has always held a big trout for me during other trips made in October in search of spawners. I always get a rise, but I don't always land the trout.

By the time I reached the area I wanted to fish, it was nearing noon and the sun was at its fullest. Nothing seemed to be emerging and I didn't see any rises. With the angle of the sun it was hard to see my fly on the water, even with polarizing glasses. Since nothing seemed to be going on, I figured I might just as well use something like a size 14 Royal Wulff that I could see reasonably well. Slowly working my way upstream, I covered the boulder area from every angle, but each cast floated back toward me without stirring the interest of a single fish. It looked like the tongue was my last opportunity. Stopping just short of the best casting position, I tested my knots and regreased my fly and horsehair.

Just as it had been at the boulder, every drift of my fly passed through the tongue and over a potential lie as if it was barren. I decided to take one more desperation cast, then eat my squashed peanut-butter sandwich. I cast without thinking really, which took my Royal Wulff to the very heart of the current and the fastest water. Out of the corner of my eye I caught a glimpse of motion as my big trout shot up from the bottom like an arrow. Without even rippling the surface, he took the fly and plunged to the bottom with such authority that setting the hook was unnecessary. Once at the bottom, he turned and rocketed back to the surface and through it. Reversing direction, like a springboard diver, he fell back and sliced into the water. In what seemed to be slow motion, he repeated his performance for a second and third time. As he entered the water after each jump, I was certain that I had seen the last of him.

With a burst of energy, and using the current as his ally, he made a run for the midstream boulder. Afraid to put too much strain on the horsehair, I lowered my rod tip and pointed it at him. Pulling my line to the start of the backing, he reached the boulder and shot into its shelter. Reaching out across the current with my rod parallel to the water, I was able to apply enough lateral pressure to lead him out from behind the boulder before the chaffing wore through the tippet or the leader. Though he still had some fight left in him, it seemed that evicting him from behind his rock had broken his spirit.

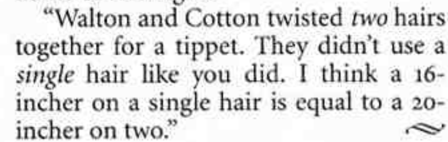
As quickly as I dared, I moved him toward me into the slower and shallower water along the bank and into my net. For a moment I just stood there and looked at him. The realization that I had in fact caught a "big" trout on a horsehair suddenly hit, and I spontaneously started doing a little jig that my sons call "Dad's happy feet." If catching him had been hard, deciding what to do with him was even harder. I generally release most of the fish I catch, so I don't know if it was pride in my trophy or the primordial instincts of the hunter as provider (probably a lot of both), but I decided to bring him back to camp.

Carefully taking my prize from the net, I broke off the horsehair tippet from the leader, leaving the fly and tippet mated to my trout. Plucking some grass from the stream bank I ceremonially wrapped him and placed him in the back pouch of my vest for the trip back to camp. The walk back down the canyon didn't take nearly as long as the trip up, but I don't think that was entirely due to the downhill grade.

Slipping the trout out of my vest, I removed my prize and laid him out for Charlie to see. After admiring him and teasing me about leaving the fly and tippet in his jaw, he said, "Well, to make it official I'd better get a tape out and measure him." I think Charlie always measures trout a little short, at least when he is measuring mine, so when he pronounced my prize as officially "big" at 16 inches, I knew I had easily, at least as far as size goes, met his challenge.

Halfway through my recounting of the catch, Charlie excused himself, rose from the log he was sitting on and headed for his tent. He returned with an old blue book in his hand. As I finished my story, Charlie, having apparently found what he was looking for, looked up at me and said, "Well, you did it. But you did it the hard way. Your copy of *The Compleat Angler* must not be the Izaak Walton and Charles Cotton edition. Here, in Part II of my copy—"The Second Day, Chapter V, Of Fly Fishing"—it says, 'But he that cannot kill a trout of 20 inches long with two deserves not the name of an Angler.'"

"Walton and Cotton twisted *two* hairs together for a tippet. They didn't use a *single* hair like you did. I think a 16-incher on a single hair is equal to a 20-incher on two."



# The American Museum of Fly Fishing

Post Office Box 42, Manchester, Vermont 05254. 802-362-3300

## JOIN!

Membership Dues (per annum*)

| | |
|---|---|
| Associate* | $25 |
| Sustaining* | $50 |
| Patron* | $250 |
| Sponsor* | $500 |
| Corporate* | $1000 |
| Life | $1500 |

Membership dues include the cost of a subscription ($20) to *The American Fly Fisher*. Please send your application to the membership secretary and include your mailing address. The Museum is a member of the American Association of Museums, the American Association of State and Local History, the New England Association of Museums, the Vermont Museum and Gallery Alliance, and the International Association of Sports Museums and Halls of Fame. We are a nonprofit, educational institution chartered under the laws of the state of Vermont.

## SUPPORT!

As an independent, nonprofit institution, the American Museum of Fly Fishing must rely on the generosity of public-spirited individuals for substantial support. We ask that you give our institution serious consideration when planning for gifts and bequests.

## VISIT!

Summer hours (May 1 through October 31) are 10 to 4. Winter hours (November 1 through April 30) are weekdays 10 to 4. We are closed on major holidays.

## BACK ISSUES!

The following back issues of *The American Fly Fisher* are available at $4 per copy:

- Volume 5, Number 3
- Volume 6, Numbers 1, 2, 3, 4
- Volume 7, Numbers 2, 3, 4
- Volume 8, Number 3
- Volume 9, Numbers 1, 2, 3
- Volume 10, Number 2
- Volume 11, Numbers 1, 2, 3, 4
- Volume 12, Number 3
- Volume 13, Number 3
- Volume 14, Numbers 1, 2
- Volume 15, Numbers 1, 2
- Volume 16, Numbers 1, 2, 3
- Volume 17, Numbers 1, 2, 3
- Volume 18, Number 1

## Museum Applies For AAM Accreditation

The American Museum of Fly Fishing achieved one of the most important goals in our twenty-four-year history recently when it was accepted as a candidate for official museum accreditation by the Accreditation Commission of the American Association of Museums (AAM).

Since its inception in 1970, the museum accreditation process has had a significant impact on the museum field. The program has promoted the attainment of high standards among accredited museums and, similarly, increased awareness of these standards among all museums. Museum accreditation has given museums a stronger public image. Governments, funding agencies, and museum audiences recognize accredited status as indicative of quality. The entire accreditation process lasts approximately two years, including a self-study program and a review by peers (colleagues who understand the particular museum's issues and concerns from firsthand experience and also bring an outside perspective to their evaluation).

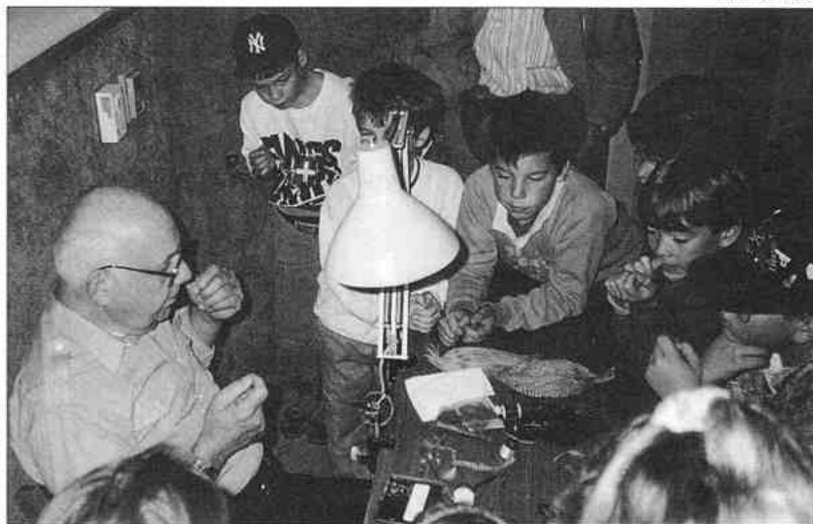
By submitting our application to the AAM, the American Museum of Fly Fishing has affirmed its ongoing commitment to the highest standards of excellence. The achievement of accredited status will also include a review process each year, conducted by the AAM, to ensure that the Museum will continue to uphold the standards of accreditation.

In the last decade, the American Museum of Fly Fishing has made some major advances. Paul Schullery, Executive Director of the Museum from 1978 to 1983, and currently Trustee Emeritus, recently wrote, "Now twenty-four years old, the Museum has reached a state of institutional maturity that allows it to publish limited-edition prints, maintain a vital traveling exhibit program, run a professionally managed collection in keeping with the standards of the greater museum community, and in many other ways do the job it was created to do." Needless to say, we've been able to reach this peak of museological activity only through the support of our officers, and many members and volunteers.

## Museum Garners Publication Award

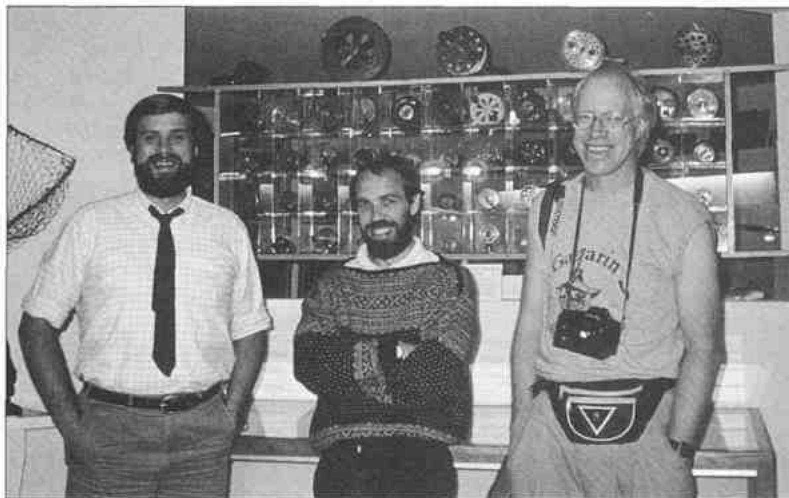
*A Treasury of Reels*, by Jim Brown, took a prestigious second place in the books-and-catalogs category of the New England Museum Association's (NEMA)

Alanna Fisher



*Volunteer Joe Pisarro demonstrating the finer points of fly tying during a visit from the children of Tinmouth Elementary School, Tinmouth, Vermont.*

Alanna Fisher




*Executive Director Don Johnson (left) welcomed visitors Magne Rugsveen, curator (center), and O. T. Lodstad, photographer (right), of the Norwegian Forestry Museum of Elverum, Norway. Both museums combined resources to mount a large, popular exhibition in Norway in 1991.*

1991 publications competition. The forty-two entries were drawn from such distinguished institutions as the Yale Center for British Art, Yale University, the Addison Gallery of American Art, Phillips Academy, the Christian A. Johnson Gallery, Middlebury College, and the Wadsworth Atheneum.

In addition to the NEMA award, *A Treasury of Reels* special limited edition of 500 books sold out in three weeks when released last spring. The book has proven itself to be a research and reference "tool" of the highest quality, and a trade edition will be released later this year. Members interested in obtaining a copy of our new deluxe edition or the trade edition of *A Treasury of Reels* should contact the Museum office for details.

## Third Annual Museum Festival Planned

The American Museum of Fly Fishing will be hosting its Third Annual Museum Festival Weekend June 5, 6, and 7, 1992 in Manchester, Vermont. Plans call for a public opening of a major contemporary art exhibition on the evening of Friday the 5th, the Museum's ever-popular Manchester dinner/auction on the evening of June 6, and a Museum open house including fly-tying demonstrations, tours, casting demonstrations, refreshments, and more during the day on June 7.

The highlight of the weekend may well be the public opening on Friday, June 5, of a five-month exhibition entitled "Water, Sky, and Time: Paintings by Adriano Manocchia." Manocchia, a New York state-based artist, is well known for his sporting art. His paintings in this museum exhibition will include angling scenes from Colorado, Montana, and Wyoming, along with images from Alaska, Vermont, and Canada. Other important works to be included will feature North American wildlife and other sporting scenes.

Manocchia's work can be found in a number of private and public collections throughout North America and his paintings have been published in dozens of magazines worldwide. He is a board member of the Society of Animal Artists and an active member of the Outdoor Writers Association of America. To commemorate "Water, Sky, and Time," the Museum will publish a special poster featuring one of Manocchia's superb paintings.

The exhibition will be on display at the Museum daily through October 31 and weekdays thereafter until November 26, 1992.

## 1991 Annual Meeting Notes

Another large group of Museum trustees from every corner of the country assembled in Manchester, Vermont, in October 1991 for the traditional trustees' dinner/auction on October 20, before gathering for highly productive membership and trustee meetings on October 21 at the Reluctant Panther Inn.

### Executive Director's Report

Don Johnson, completing his fourth year as the Museum's Executive Director, reported that the Museum had completed an extensive program of renovation and expansion which involved a doubling of exhibition space from 1,000 square feet to roughly 2,100 square feet, the creation of an audio/visual room, and improvements to the publications office and gift shop. The entire program was completed under budget. Don noted that the project was designed to make the Museum building barrier free and that the Agency of Human Services of the State of Vermont had applauded the Museum's commitment in assuring that every citizen has equal access to the Museum's programs.

In summarizing Museum activity throughout the year, Don reported that the Museum's full- and part-time professional staff continued to perform superbly, and that he anticipated increasing the full-time staff in 1992 by adding a development/membership coordinator.

For the fourth consecutive year the American Museum of Fly Fishing's crucial Dinner/Auction Program showed improvement, as did other income categories such as membership, contributions, publications, and exhibitions. The American Museum of Fly Fishing also increased its activity in traveling exhibitions, educational programming, collections, and publications. Trustee, member, and volunteer support also increased markedly in 1991.

### 1992 Annual Budget

A fiscal 1992 budget totaling nearly $320,000 was reviewed and accepted. As a point of reference, it is interesting to note that the American Museum of Fly Fishing's budget was $186,000 in fiscal 1988. The increase in the 1992 budget will help fund another full-time staff position and enable the Museum to publish both the deluxe and trade editions of its award-winning book, *A Treasury of Reels* written by Jim Brown.

### American Association of Museum Accreditation

A major goal was accomplished in 1991 when the American Museum of Fly Fishing was accepted as a candidate for American Association of Museum Accreditation by their Accreditation Commission. The entire accreditation process will be completed in eighteen to twenty-four months, in time, we hope, for the Museum's Twenty-fifth Anniversary in midsummer 1993.

### Exhibitions

Nineteen ninety-one was a banner year for the American Museum of Fly Fishing. The Museum's national traveling exhibition "Anglers All" appeared at

the Manitowoc Maritime Museum, Manitowoc, Wisconsin. Another large Museum exhibition, "The Tie That Binds," was hosted by the Museum of the Jimmy Carter Library, and a significant showing of many of the components of the Museum's William Cushner Collection appeared at the Norwegian Forestry Museum in Elverum, Norway. The latter was the Museum's first large international exhibition. In all, the American Museum of Fly Fishing participated in developing or assisting in fourteen exhibitions, including the three major exhibitions noted above, as well as four smaller exhibits, and seven ongoing permanent exhibits. Additionally, the American Museum of Fly Fishing's staff helped design the Museum's new exhibition areas and installed "The World of Salmon," a highly successful in-house exhibit. Looking to the future, we see that "Anglers All" will appear at no less than three museums in 1992 and possibly travel on a European tour.

### Publications

The American Museum of Fly Fishing's first book, *A Treasury of Reels*, was published in a special limited-edition of 500 copies and subsequently sold out within three weeks. *A Treasury of Reels* took second place honors in competition with forty-two other publications in the 1991 New England Museum Association publications competition. Deluxe and trade editions of *A Treasury of Reels* will be released in 1992. The Museum's next book will focus on its rod collection and will be written by David Klausmeyer. Publication is scheduled for 1993. The quality of the Museum's quarterly journal, *The American Fly Fisher*, continued to improve under the direction of its new editor, Margot Page, art director Randall Perkins, copy editor Sarah May Clarkson, and with the support of the entire Museum staff.

### Capital Campaign and Endowment

The American Museum of Fly Fishing's development committee reported the successful completion of "The Campaign for the American Museum of Fly Fishing: Preserving a Rich Heritage for Future Generations." The campaign's stated 1990-1991 goal of $200,000 was exceeded by over $25,000. Support from the Museum's trustees, development committee, and members was exceptional. As a direct result of the success of the campaign and the generosity of special friends, the Museum was also able to establish its first endowment in 1991.

### Twenty-Fifth Anniversary

In 1993 the American Museum of Fly Fishing will be celebrating its Twenty-fifth Anniversary, marking a quarter century of museological activity that includes conservation, research, national exhibitions, and public education about the art, craft, industry, and sport of fly fishing. A Twenty-fifth Anniversary Committee has been created to plan and execute the American Museum of Fly Fishing's schedule of celebration activity in Manchester, Vermont, and around the country.

### Awards

The American Museum of Fly Fishing's trustees voted unanimously to recognize the outstanding service given to the Museum over the last twenty-three years by honoring outgoing Chairman of the Board, Leigh H. Perkins. Leigh has been a devoted and generous member of our museum family since he helped found the American Museum of Fly Fishing in 1967-1968. Former officer and trustee William Herrick and John Farnum, the Museum's general contractor during our recent renovation and expansion, were also thanked for services rendered to the Museum.

### 1992 Annual Meeting

It was resolved that the 1992 Annual Meeting of the American Museum of Fly Fishing would be held in Denver, Colorado, in October 1992. The Annual Meeting will return to Manchester, Vermont, in 1993 and 1994.

Margot Page

*Staff members from the Peabody Museum of Natural History at Yale University met in Manchester to plan the upcoming exhibit of "Anglers All" at the Peabody in the fall of 1992. Left to right: AMFF Curator Alanna Fisher, Ray Pupedis (Collections Manager for Entomology, Peabody), AMFF Executive Director Don Johnson, Ken Yellis (Assistant Director for Public Programs, Peabody), and Michael D. Coe (Curator of Anthropology, Peabody).*

## "Anglers All" to Appear at Three Museums in 1992

"Anglers All," the Museum's largest traveling exhibition, will appear at three diverse museums during 1992. In January 1992, this 2,000-plus-square-foot exhibit opened at the Catawba Science Center, Hickory, North Carolina. In August 1992, it travels west to the Wildlife of the American West Art Museum in Jackson, Wyoming. And finally, in November, it returns east for a six-month appearance at the Peabody Museum of Natural History, Yale University, New Haven, Connecticut.

The Museum's policy is to reach as many people as possible with its traveling exhibitions. "Anglers All" will be on the road most of the year with an annual in-house inspection of the components for inventory, insurance, and conservation purposes. By the end of 1992, "Anglers All" will have appeared in ten states since 1985 and been viewed by over three million people.

## New Trustees

The Museum welcomed six new motivated and talented trustees at the 1991 Annual Membership Meeting held in October. They are Richard Tisch (term ending 1992), James Hunter (term ending 1993), E. M. Bakwin, Thomas

Davidson, Audun Fredricksen, and Malcolm MacKenzie (terms ending 1994).

**Richard G. Tisch** was raised in northern New Jersey where he has fished the lakes and streams of the northeastern United States and eastern Canada. He is environmental counsel for Union Carbide Industrial Gases Inc., in Danbury, Connecticut, and adjunct professor of International Environmental Law at Pace University Law School in White Plains, New York. He regularly fishes the Beaverkill River in the Catskills and the Miramichi River in New Brunswick, Canada. Richard, his wife, Wendy, and son, Alexander, live in Pound Ridge, New York.

Barbara Trotter

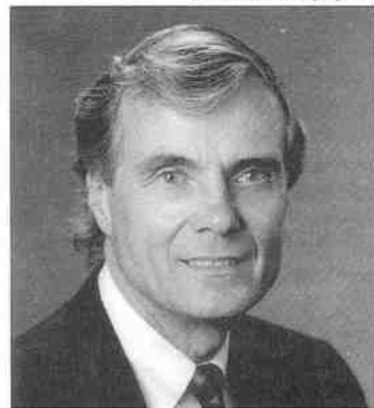
**James Hunter,** of Manchester Center, Vermont, was the president of the James Hunter Machine Company in North Adams, Massachusetts, in addition to being a past director of New England Electric System, Dodge Fibers, the Mennen Company, and past president of the American Textile Machinery Association. A graduate of Deerfield Academy (1937) and Harvard Business School (1945), he and his wife, Irene, have four children and eleven grandchildren. Jim has been an Atlantic salmon enthusiast for twenty years.

**E. M. Bakwin,** of Chicago, Illinois, is chairman and director of the Mid-City National Bank of Chicago, of Mid-Citco, Inc., and of the National Stock Yards Company, and director of the Robertson Onshore Drilling Company. A graduate of Phillips Exeter Academy (1946), Hamilton College (1950), and the University of Chicago (M.B.A., 1961), E. M. (Pete) has served on a number of not-for-profit boards, including the University of Chicago Advisory since 1972. He is a member of the New York Yacht Club, the World Business Council, and the Chicago Presidents' Organization, among others.

**Thomas N. Davidson,** of Key Largo, Florida, and Toronto, Ontario, graduated from Michigan State University and after eight years with Exxon moved to Toronto, Canada, to establish an entrepreneurial business career, including ownership and active involvement in corporations producing plastic packaging, residential furniture, steel manufacturing, brass smelting, nuclear reactor components, and specialty chemicals. He and his wife, Sally, have four children, including three sons who are active fly fishers. Tom is now semiretired (maybe) and actively pursuing fly-fishing interests on a broader geographic horizon—the Florida Keys, western United States, Canada, and South America.

**Audun Fredrickson** was born and raised in Norway, but came to the United States to earn a B.S. in chemical engineering from the University of Minnesota in 1948 and a Master's of Business in 1949. Signing on with the 3M Corporation in 1950, he eventually served as vice president for all European operations, and retired early in 1980. He now lives in San Francisco and Key Biscayne and travels to Europe every chance he can. Very active in cultural activities, Audun is an avid fly fisher and upland bird hunter. He has three children and two granchildren.

Ira Nozik Photographers

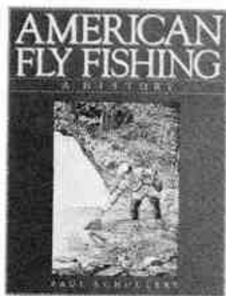


**Malcolm MacKenzie,** of Bloomfield, Connecticut, is president of the Amscot Printing Group, based in Bloomfield. Born and educated in Scotland, where he graduated from Glasgow College, Malcolm came to the United States in 1962 at age twenty-four. Active in trade and civic activities, he is, among other things, a national director and member of the Executive Committee of the Printing Industries of America. An avid outdoorsman, Malcolm is married and the father of six children (he, understandably, happens to be the founder and coach of the Granby Rovers Soccer Club). Besides fishing, he enjoys such hobbies as scuba diving, running, farming, gardening, building, hunting, and training dogs.

# Two Fine History Books for Your Library

*American Fly Fishing: A History*

by Paul Schullery



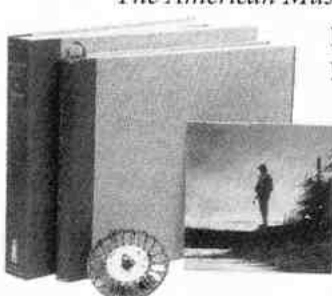

The American Museum of Fly Fishing is pleased to offer again *American Fly Fishing: A History* by Paul Schullery, which is being republished by Lyons & Burford, Publishers. Here is *the* comprehensive book to which all fly fishers can turn for historical information. Paul Schullery has sifted through the facts and myths surrounding the history of fly fishing in America and given fresh evaluations of all the major figures of the sport: Thaddeus Norris, John Harrington Keene, Theodore Gordon, Preston Jennings, Vincent Marinaro, Arnold Gingrich, and many others. Schullery assesses the impact of technological advances in tackle and fly patterns on fly-fishing history, and the incorporation of European traditions into our own.

This now-classic book is written by one of the country's leading angling historians: Paul Schullery, a Trustee Emeritus and former Executive Director of the American Museum of Fly Fishing (1977-1982). *American Fly Fishing: A History* was originally commissioned by the American Museum of Fly Fishing; proceeds from the sale of this book directly support the Museum.

*American Fly Fishing: A History* is available for $35 plus shipping from Lyons & Burford, Publishers, 31 West 21 Street, New York, N. Y. 10010; 212-620-9580; or in the giftshop of the Museum.

Large 8 ½" x 11" format; 278 pages; over 120 historic illustrations.

*A Treasury of Reels: The Fishing Reel Collection of The American Museum of Fly Fishing*



Introduction & catalog by Jim Brown

Photographs by Bob O'Shaughnessy

The American Museum of Fly Fishing holds one of the largest and finest public collections of fly reels in the world. Brought together in this richly diverse collection which includes more than 750 reels spanning nearly two centuries of British and American reelmaking, are antique, classic, and modern reels; those owned by presidents, entertainers, novelists, angling luminaries, and reels owned and used by everyday anglers.

This deluxe limited edition has been hand-bound in brown Nigerian goatskin with leather along the fore-edge of each board; the front and back boards are an imported Dutch linen cloth, and the spine is stamped in 22-carat gold. Each book is sewn with linen hinges and features Italian paper endsheets, leather endbands at the top and bottom of the spine, and a ribbon marker.

The frontispiece features a luminous four-color print of renowned artist John Swan's oil painting, *New Moon.* With over 200 black-and-white photographs; more than 75 historic illustrations; large 11" x 8 ½" format; over 200 pages.

One hundred numbered and signed copies of this deluxe, hand-bound edition are being offered for sale at $450 each (includes shipping and handling). There are only *twenty* copies still available. Send your check or call: The American Museum of Fly Fishing, P.O. Box 42, Manchester, Vermont 05254; 802-362-3300.

# Museum Gift Shop

Our popular **T-shirts** are made of 100% preshrunk cotton. Specify color (navy or cream) and size (S, M, L, XL), $15 each, plus $2 postage and handling.

AN ARTIST'S CREEL · June 9–August 7, 1989

Peter Corbin

Our pewter **pin** features our logo in silver on an olive-green background. Our patch is silver and black on a Dartmouth Green background; $5 each, plus $1 postage and handling.

Four-color exhibition **posters** printed on high-quality glossy stock, ample borders. *Right,* "Time On the Water" by John Swan (26"x 20"). *Above,* "An Artist's Creel" by Peter Corbin (26"x 23"); $15 each, plus $2.25 postage and handling.

*Left,* "Lost Pool," special limited edition **print** by John Swan, printed on acid-free paper (15 ⅞"x 26 ¾"), ample borders. Each signed and numbered print, $95. Postage and handling included.

*Please make checks payable to: AMFF and send to P.O. Box 42, Manchester, VT 05254.*

*MasterCard, Visa, and American Express accepted. Call 802-362-3300.*

## CONTRIBUTORS

As the son of an oil executive, **Timothy Belknap** grew up mostly in Kenya. But his grandparents had a home in Columbia County, New York, that he would visit some summers, and he has been fishing its streams on and off since the age of eleven. A newspaper reporter, most recently for the *Detroit Free Press,* and now a senior copy editor at *Business Week,* Tim lives with his wife, Cathy, and flat-coat retriever, Beau, on New York's West Side, where he fishes for striped bass and Beau points pigeons.

Dave Whitlock

**Nick Lyons**, a former professor of English at Hunter College in New York, is now president of Lyons & Burford, Publishers, which specializes in fly fishing titles. He is the author of five books on fly fishing and a regular column, "The Seasonable Angler" in *Fly Fisherman.* Currently at work on a new book, *Spring Creek,* he served as a Museum trustee for many years.

A resident of Dallas, Texas (when he's not fishing in Montana, Wyoming, or Idaho, or traveling for business), **Albert J. Cohen**'s interests are in fishing history, especially British and American, and in collecting antique flies, fly boxes and wallets, fly-dressing materials, and hooks. He is a member of many angling and conservation groups, including Trout Unlimited, Federation of Fly Fishermen, Dallas Fly Fishers, Henry's Fork Foundation, B.A.S.S., Yellowstone Coalition, and the Fly Dressers Guild (England).

John Bates

Nancy Thrutchley

**Norm Crisp**, a senior water scientist with Region VII of the U. S. Environmental Protection Agency located in Kansas City, holds advanced degrees in both water resources engineering and fisheries biology. His area of expertise is in biological monitoring of water quality, especially the use of *Chironomids* (midges) as water quality indicators. He is a member of several professional and fishing organizations, including the American Water Resources Association, North American Benthological Society, American Fisheries Society, Trout Unlimited, and the Atlantic Salmon Federation. Norm has been biomonitoring around the world for trout with a fly rod since his childhood in New Hampshire.

# Museological Musings

I'VE HAD A LONGSTANDING love affair with books. In fact, I'm the type of person who can't fall asleep without reading first. No day, it seems, is ever complete for me until I've buried my nose in a book and read at least a page or two. It's become a hallowed tradition with me to read as many books as I can during the holiday season, that relatively quiet time between the end of November and late December when the traveling stops and Museum traffic slows. I kept this tradition alive last year by devouring the first two volumes of Peter Neuman's riotous trilogy on the Hudson's Bay Company and the fur trade in Canada's northern vastness; all of Barry Lopez's compelling *Arctic Dreams*; a book on French wine that I purchased at Border's Bookstore in Philadelphia, A. S. Byatt's delicious gothic romance/mystery, *Possession*; Robert Perkins's poetic *Into the Great Solitude;* and *Rethinking the Museum and Other Meditations* by Stephen Weil, a thought-provoking examination of the contemporary museum world in North America and abroad.

I particularly enjoyed Perkins's *Into the Great Solitude,* which was presented to me by the good people who serve on the Museum's Boston dinner/auction committee. Briefly, *Solitude* is a lovingly crafted prose-diary recounting a 700-mile solo canoe trip down the Back River in Canada's Northwest Territories to the arctic tidewater. It's also a book about life, family, and dreams. Needless to say, this book comes highly recommended, especially to those of you who love the north and delight in reading about wolves, loons, rapids, the Inuit, char, blackflies, musk oxen, and two-mile portages.

Perkins's interest in the Back River was triggered after he discovered a copy of *Narrative of the Arctic Land Expedition to the Mouth of the Great Fish River, and Along the Shores of the Arctic Ocean in the Years 1833, 1834 and 1835* by Captain George Back (1796-1878) of Britain's Royal Navy. Back was one of those larger-than-life sailor/explorers of the nineteenth century who played a fairly significant role in charting the fabled "Northwest Passage," and exploring—on two incredible expeditions—much of what is now the Northwest Territories. He was also, interestingly enough, a fly fisherman! We really don't know all that much about this aspect of his life. We do know, thanks to the diary kept by Dr. John Richardson, that Back fished with the artificial fly on a number of occasions during Captain (later Sir) John Franklin's first "Northern Land Expedition" between 1819-1822, and that he definitely was successful catching a number of species of fish, including grayling. *Into the Great Solitude* rekindled my own interest in George Back and I plan to travel to a number of museums in Canada this summer to peruse his diaries and extant letters. Who knows what treasures I'll find?

Weil's *Rethinking the Museum and Other Meditations* also opened some new doors for me. Among other things, he reinforces our philosophy here at the American Museum of Fly Fishing when he states, ". . . we must envision a higher professionalism, one in which museum staff members become as expert and skillful in responding to community needs and desires as they are today in collecting, preserving, studying, exhibiting, and interpreting collections." Further, ". . . those who work in small museums may have long since recognized (or perhaps have never forgotten) what some people who work in larger museums are only beginning to understand—that maintenance of professional standards, critical as that may be, cannot be substituted for a sense of community service if a museum is long to survive." Our primary goal at the Museum is to combine, in everything that we do, stringent professional standards and an all-encompassing ethic of public service.

Weil also got me thinking about what he calls "museological service" (a term I really love) and how it should be delivered by museums as particular educational institutions. This is, I think, *the* objective test of any museum's success. If we list some of the criteria that can be used to document this success, we can intimately observe how our museum progressed in 1991. *Staff size* was increased; *grants received* were again up; *staff education* was enhanced when members of our staff attended university classes during the year; *the average length of visitation* grew; *square footage* was multiplied by the renovation project. And what about *exhibitions?* The American Museum of Fly Fishing was involved in fourteen traveling and long-term exhibitions in 1991. *Volunteer hours* totaled approximately 1,400 hours, and this represented in-house service here at the Museum. If we add the thousands of hours contributed by our supporters around the country in maintaining and building the Museum's successful dinner/auction program alone, one gets a real sense of just how many dedicated individuals believe in the Museum and all that we do.

In the *research* area our staff answered upwards of sixty-two inquiry letters and 192 phone calls seeking the Museum's assistance; additionally, they supplied photos and other images to twenty-three authors, editors, newspapers, etc. And then we can add *public awareness,* since our staff participated in six sport/angling shows and gave five audio/visual presentations. Finally, *publications:* the Museum upgraded its journal; published *A Treasury of Reels,* its first book (which subsequently garnered a prestigious award after selling out in three weeks); and laid the groundwork for the publication of two additional editions of the same book, as well as another devoted to the Museum's rod collection.

I think all of the above serves as a relevant indicator of both the Museum's level of activity and the quantum service we conveyed to the public.

The real challenge that we now face is to build on this level of activity and service—no easy task, especially in this time of recession. Still, I think we'll meet the challenge and then some. And through our success we'll continue to add to the accumulated heritage passed on to present generations and, moreover, actually build the apparatus through which we will pass on that received heritage to future generations. My colleagues and I are honored to be able to provide this, the highest form of service.

DON JOHNSON
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

The American Museum of Fly Fishing, a nonprofit educational institution dedicated to preserving the rich heritage of fly fishing, was founded in Manchester, Vermont, in 1968. The Museum serves as a repository for, and conservator to, the world's largest collection of angling and angling-related objects. The Museum's collections and exhibits provide the public with thorough documentation of the evolution of fly fishing as a sport, art form, craft, and industry in the United States and abroad from the sixteenth century to the present. Rods, reels, and flies, as well as tackle, art, books, manuscripts, and photographs, form the major components of the Museum's collection.

The Museum has gained recognition as a unique educational institution. It supports a publications program through which its national quarterly journal, *The American Fly Fisher*, and books, art prints, catalogs, and newsletters are regularly offered to the public. The Museum's traveling exhibits program has made it possible for educational exhibits to be viewed across the United States and abroad. The Museum also provides in-house exhibits, related interpretive programming, and research services for members, visiting scholars, authors, and students.

The Museum is an active, member-oriented nonprofit institution. For information, please contact: The American Museum of Fly Fishing, P. O. Box 42, Manchester, Vermont 05254, 802-362-3300.