The American Fly Fisher

Journal of the American Museum of Fly Fishing

WINTER 2011 VOLUME 37 NUMBER 1

Law, Culture, and Provenance

Most of us have systems in place to help us meet goals as efficiently as we can. Within the world of fly fishing and its many subcultures, systems exist to help us conserve, cultivate, and even catch fish. Everyone has a particular way of doing things—game wardens, fish culturists, and collectors, for example.

It was Michigan's declining whitefish industry in the 1870s that led to the first of that state's game laws and establishment of the game warden system. But commercial fishing wasn't the only threat to fish numbers; sport fishing also played its role in the days before size limitations and creel limits. Early game wardens were either locally or privately financed, and the politics of enforcement of new laws were complicated and sometimes dangerous. Bryon Borgelt, in "River Police: Early Game Wardens on Michigan's Au Sable River" (page 16), explores the early days of Michigan's game conservation laws, highlighting a few interesting characters.

Seth Green, Fred Mather, Livingston Stone: these are well-known names in American fish culture. But John H. Slack? Although he was author of *Practical Trout Culture* (1872), a founder the American Fish Culturists' Association, a deputy U.S. fish commissioner, and a key player in a nationwide campaign to introduce nonnative species to new waters, few know much about him. J. I. Merritt became intrigued by Slack years ago when he learned about Slack's attempts to establish a hatchery-based run of Oregon steelhead on New Jersey's Raritan River and a salmon run on the Delaware. When Merritt failed to find much in the record about Slack, he began digging deeper. "Hunting Dr. Slack: American Fish Culture's Forgotten Man," begins on page 2.

Austin S. Hogan became the museum's first curator in 1970 and founding editor of the *American Fly Fisher* in 1974. During the 1960s and 1970s, each time he saw his son, Austin W. Hogan, he passed things along to him: copies of chapters he was writing, notes, and fly books and boxes. Austin S. also mailed flies to his son when Austin W. was working afield near good streams. Austin W. collected his father's things in a trunk, the contents of which he is now preparing to donate to the museum. The handwritten and typed notes accompanying many of these items are helpful in establishing origin and provenance. In "On Some Philosophies of Collecting: Provenance of the Austin S. Hogan Collection" (page 8), Austin W. Hogan proposes a nine-tiered ladder of provenance for flies, nymphs, bucktails, and streamers to guide collectors. He then highlights parts of his collection and discusses where these items fall on the ladder of provenance.

From Genio C. Scott, Fishing in American Waters *(New York: Harper & Brothers, Publishers, 1869), 355.*

And speaking of collections, we like to highlight our own in these pages. If you visit the American Museum of Fly Fishing and happen to glance upward before you enter, you'll see our salmon weather vane, crafted by Warren Gilker, atop the building. In this issue's Gallery piece, "Up on the Roof" (page 24), Sara Wilcox speaks to us of weather vanes, of Warren Gilker's Grand Cascapedia history, and of his weather vane's history with us.

As always, Museum News (page 26) covers the events we've been so busily hosting over the last few months. We'd like to draw special attention to one held in October for Project Healing Waters Fly Fishing, a group dedicated to the physical and emotional rehabilitation of disabled active military service personnel and veterans through fly-fishing and fly-tying education and outings (page 28). Eight veterans learned to cast from our wheelchair-accessible casting platform. Executive Director Cathi Comar tells the story of events leading up to that day. We hope that many of you will visit our new bridge and platform come spring.

Kathleen Achor
Editor

The American Museum of Fly Fishing
Preserving the Heritage of Fly Fishing

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ON THE COVER: *Michigan Game Warden Rube Babbit on the Au Sable River, 1930. Used with permission from the Fuller's North Branch Outing Club.*

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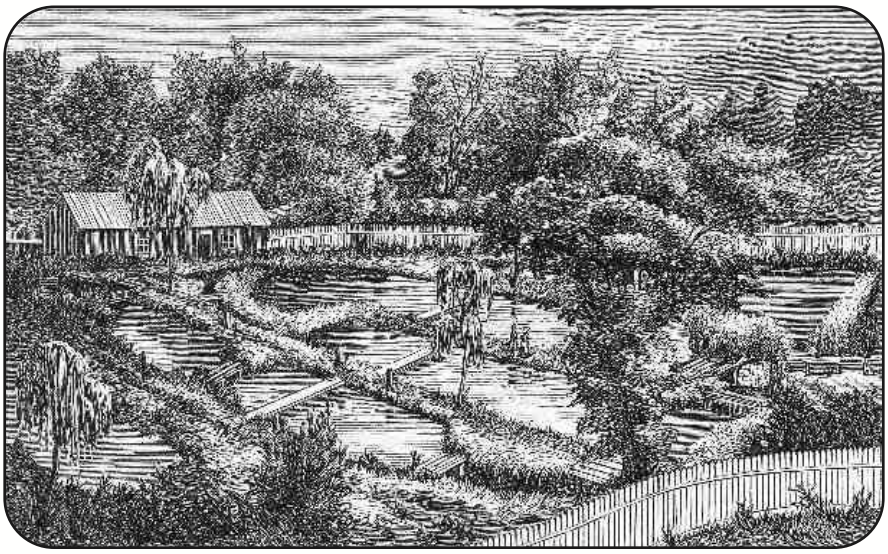
Hunting Dr. Slack: American Fish Culture's Forgotten Man

by J. I. Merritt



Troutdale Ponds, from John H. Slack, Practical Trout Culture *(1872).*

One evening in the spring of 1878, commercial fishermen working a bank of the Delaware River a few miles upstream from Trenton, New Jersey, hauled in their net and were greeted by an amazing sight. Amid the flopping American shad, their target species, was a fish of a kind they had never seen. Like the 3- to 6-pound shad, it was silver flanked, but sleeker and a lot bigger. It measured almost 42 inches and when weighed the next day tipped the scales at more than 23 pounds.

It was an Atlantic salmon, a cold-water species whose natural range, then as now, did not extend south of New England. The fishermen took their catch to Edward J. Anderson, a commissioner of New Jersey fisheries, who forwarded it to the Washington, D.C., office of Spencer Fullerton Baird, then commissioner of U.S. fisheries. The politically savvy Baird lost no time showing it off to President Rutherford B. Hayes and influential members of Congress in support of his efforts to introduce salmon to the Delaware and other rivers.

The great fish was evidently a male on its spawning run; in a letter to Anderson, Baird noted that its lower jaw was developing a hook. From its size he estimated it was five years old, which meant it probably started as a fry "hatched out at Dr. Slack's place" and released into the Musconetcong River, a Delaware tributary, in the spring of 1873.[1]

"Dr. Slack's place" was Troutdale Ponds, a New Jersey hatchery owned by John H. Slack, a Philadelphia physician turned fish culturist. Although now more or less forgotten, Slack was a key player in a nationwide campaign led by Baird to introduce nonnative species to new waters. It was a vast ecological exercise with profound consequences—mainly positive—for American fisheries. To cite just one example, today's Delaware River supports a diverse mix of native and nonnative species: American shad, striped bass, shortnose sturgeon, and brook trout (all indigenous); and smallmouth and largemouth bass, rock bass, walleye, bluegill, muskellunge, channel catfish, European carp, and brown and rainbow trout (all introduced, mostly in the second half of the nineteenth century).

Between 1870 and 1875, Slack's operation raised more than 170,000 Atlantic salmon fry and released them into the Musconetcong and other Delaware tributaries; this was in addition to 154,000 released into the Raritan and two other New Jersey watersheds.[2] During this same period, Troutdale also hatched 450,000 Pacific salmon fry from fertilized eggs shipped from California on the new transcontinental railroad. Most of these (265,000) were deposited in the Delaware, with the rest going to other eastern rivers.[3]

Baird, Slack, and others in the vanguard of the fish-culture movement viewed the introduction of salmon as eminently worth trying, and for a time it looked like their grand experiment might succeed. In 1874, large numbers of smolts (young salmon on their way to the ocean) were observed in the Delaware, and a few were caught by anglers. A year later, shad fishermen near Bristol,

Pennsylvania, netted a grilse (a small salmon, usually between 5 and 7 pounds, returning to fresh water after one year at sea). The record is silent for 1876, but in 1877 netters landed eight returning salmon between 8 and 20 pounds; a contemporary account relates how one of them wound up on the plate of a certain "Capt. Yard, of Trenton," who pronounced it "as fine a salmon as he had ever tasted either in England, Scotland, or California."[4]

In 1878, a year that would turn out to be the project's high-water mark, Delaware shad nets yielded an estimated fifty to one hundred salmon ranging from 12 to 29 pounds. Many more were observed in the river after the close of the shad season on June 10, a few as far upstream as Port Jervis, New York, 85 miles above the tide line at Trenton.[5] The presence of mature salmon in the Delaware left Baird and the fish commissioners of New Jersey and Pennsylvania cautiously optimistic about the possibility of creating a self-sustaining run. A Trenton newspaper was less guarded in its assessment. The report of so many salmon ascending the river, it declared, "warrants the belief that in a few years we shall have a supply of this noble fish at our very doors."[6]

A Passion for Natural History

I've been intrigued by Slack since first reading about him thirty years ago in a magazine article promoting an attempt (ultimately abandoned) to establish a hatchery-based run of Oregon steelhead on New Jersey's Raritan River.[7] The article cited as a precedent Slack's attempt to establish a salmon run on the Delaware. My curiosity was further piqued by learning that Slack had raised his salmon fry at a hatchery on the Musconetcong, a river I regularly fish, and that the steelhead stocked in the Raritan came from a hatchery built on Slack's site. A decade later, while doing research for an article about America's pioneering fish culturists, I found plenty of information about Slack's peers—Seth Green, Fred Mather, and Livingston Stone—but almost nothing about him.[8] Recently, I began to dig deeper into the record, and with help from several Slack descendants, I've managed to flesh out a fuller picture of this energetic and multifaceted man.

Born and raised in Philadelphia, John Hamilton Slack (1834–1874) graduated from the University of Pennsylvania in 1856 and three years later was awarded a degree by its school of medicine.[9] His family seems to have been reasonably prosperous: one of his obituaries refers to him as "a gentleman of liberal means," and as a young man he had the wherewithal to tour Europe and North Africa. The same obituary says he was "a painter of some ability"[10] as well as a composer whose published arrangement of "Home, Sweet Home" was a favorite in thousands of Victorian parlors; he was also an amateur printer who, on a home press, produced handmade volumes of prose and poetry in a "sumptuous style."[11]

Slack's chief passion was natural history. As a member of the Academy of Natural Sciences of Philadelphia, he helped excavate the nation's first nearly complete dinosaur skeleton from a marl pit in Haddonfield, New Jersey; contributed articles on mammalogy to the academy's journal; and wrote a popular guide to its museum displays.[12]

Slack was a fisherman, and it's reasonable to assume that he patronized the Philadelphia tackle shop of rod maker and angling *éminence grise* Thaddeus Norris.[13] "Uncle Thad," also known as "the American Walton," was the author of *The American Angler's Book* (1864) and a generation older than Slack. The companionable Norris enjoyed the company of

Left: Cover of sheet music to John H. Slack's arrangement of "Home Sweet Home." http://nla.gov.au/nla.mus-vn3073410.

Below: The Slack family home, and since 1941 the headquarters of the Warren County Rod and Gun Club.

J. I. Merritt

J. I. Merritt

The spring that attracted Thaddeus Norris to the site for Troutdale Ponds. Today it supplies the water for the Musky Trout Hatchery.

younger anglers, and at some point it's likely they struck up a friendship. At the very least we know they were acquainted.[14]

Norris was interested in the developing science of fish culture and looking for suitable property for building a hatchery. One of his angling pals was the rod maker Samuel Phillippe, who helped him find just such a place near Bloomsbury, New Jersey, 9 miles across the Delaware from Phillippe's home in Easton, Pennsylvania. Norris later recorded that he started the hatchery in May 1866 and sold it sixteen months later "in an uncompleted condition to Dr. J. H. Slack."[15]

In the summer of 1867, Slack took possession of 169 acres bordering the lower Musconetcong, in a valley of gently rolling farmland and neat stone houses. Troutdale Ponds, the hatchery itself, took up several acres adjacent to the river. Its outstanding natural feature was a limestone spring gushing a thousand gallons a minute of pure 50-degree water, winter and summer.[16] The spring fed into the single pond dug by Norris and stocked with a few hundred anemic trout. These "died by dozens," wrote Slack in a recollection of his first year of on-the-job training, while "our spawn from want of proper knowledge of the theory of impregnation, and the sickly condition of our parent fishes, perished by thousands." Thousands more washed away in a flood, and thieves absconded with the few healthy adult fish.[17]

Slack persevered. Setting out immediately to make improvements, he added more ponds, with raceways connecting them, and a hatching-house for fertilizing and incubating eggs. On a rise overlooking the hatchery, he built a handsome two-story frame house for himself and his wife, Thirza, and their two small children; two more children soon followed.[18]

In the spring of 1868, a *Harper's Weekly* correspondent visiting Troutdale found everything in order. By now, three ponds nurtured a thriving population of trout segregated by size. On some of the larger fish Slack had bestowed nicknames culled from the Bible, literature, and the era's politics: the "totally blind" Bartimeus, for example, and the "long, lean, lantern-jawed" Don Quixote. A trout whose colors seemed to change from week to week he dubbed Horace Greeley, after the mercurial editor of the *New York Tribune*; the unfortunate fish disappeared down the "captious throat" of an aggressive cannibal named General Grant.[19]

Conservation as Well as Commerce

Slack's decision to pursue the business of farming fish, particularly trout, was part of a larger movement sweeping the country. The artifical breeding of trout was already well established in Europe, and Americans saw financial opportunity in raising native brook trout for sale to markets and restaurants and to sportsmen eager to stock them in private waters. By 1870 several hundred hatcheries were in operation around the country.[20]

Conservation as well as commerce motivated men like Slack because stocking was a way, seemingly, to restore fisheries depleted by logging, pollution, and the absence of effective game laws. In the wake of pell-mell commercial development following the Civil War, states began creating fisheries commissions to promote conservation. New Jersey's was established in 1870, with Dr. John H. Slack and fellow physician Dr. Benjamin P. Howell of Woodbury, New Jersey, as charter commissioners.[21]

Slack and Howell met with their counterparts on Pennsylvania's fisheries commission, and together they drafted an ambitious joint agenda for the Delaware.[22] It included a survey of all commercial fishing operations, inspection of eel weirs and other potential barriers to the river's anadromous fish (shad, herring, sturgeon, and striped bass), and recommendations for tougher conservation laws and the hiring of wardens ("fish-police") to enforce them. In their first annual report, the New Jersey commissioners noted that the river appeared to be "suitable habitat" for Atlantic salmon and would be stocked with a thousand fry "hatched by the artificial process."[23]

The state legislature hadn't authorized funds for stocking, and the commissioners stated they would be doing this at their own expense. Soon enough, however, they found a reliable underwriter in the federal government. Slack and several other hatchery owners had recently founded the American Fish Culturists' Association, which successfully lobbied Spencer Fullerton Baird at the newly established U.S. Commission of Fish and Fisheries to sponsor a national stocking effort, for which Congress appropriated $15,000.[24]

Among other activities, these funds paid for the establishment of Baird Station, a hatchery on California's McCloud River under the direction of Livingston Stone. The McCloud was an upper tributary of the Sacramento and the spawning grounds of Quinnat or "Sacramento" salmon, now called chinook or king salmon, the largest of five species of Pacific salmon found in North America. Stone's job was supplying eastern rivers with their impregnated ova, and his first shipment went directly to Troutdale. Packed in wet moss for their transcontinental journey, the 30,000 eggs arrived in November 1872. When Slack unpacked them, he saw immediately that most had spoiled, but he managed to salvage and hatch 7,000.[25] At Baird's direction, the fry from this initial batch went into the Susquehanna River at Harrisburg.

Earlier in 1872, Slack had received sixty boxes packed with Atlantic salmon eggs from a German hatchery on the

Rhine River; of 750,000 eggs, all but 5,000 perished. Slack hatched them successfully and deposited the fry in the Musconetcong.[26] In the spring of 1873, Troutdale received 40,000 Atlantic salmon eggs from Maine's Penobscot River; Slack hatched 33,000, of which 18,000 went into the Musconetcong and 15,000 into the Raritan.[27]

Spoilage was a problem with ova transported long distances, but Slack, Stone, and the rest of Baird's team learned from their mistakes, and survival rates improved. Three shipments of Pacific salmon eggs arrived from California in the fall of 1873. Slack saved just 17 percent of the first lot (25,000 out of 150,000), but 74 percent of the second (130,000 out of 175,000) and 80 percent of the third (200,000 out of 250,000).[28] Released into the Musconetcong and other rivers that winter, the young fish appeared to thrive. Reporting to Baird, Slack wrote that in the Musconetcong he found "large numbers of salmon beneath projecting roots and rocks."[29] He pronounced the commission's efforts "a perfect success."[30]

Troutdale was a busy place. It had become New Jersey's de facto state "hatching house," not only for Atlantic and Pacific salmon but for "salmon-trout" (sea-run brook trout) and landlocked salmon, two other species the fisheries commission introduced into state waters. The hatchery was also raising smallmouth bass and brook trout for private stockings, and watercress for sale in urban markets.[31]

Despite the hectic pace, Slack found time to write a guide to fish farming. His *Practical Trout Culture* appeared in 1872, the same year as Livingston Stone's *Domesticated Trout.* These were the third and fourth American books on aquaculture published in four years, an indication of the demand for information about this rapidly developing field; they were preceded by Thaddeus Norris's *American Fish Culture* (1868) and Seth Green's *Trout Culture* (1870). Fred Mather's *Modern Fishculture in Fresh and Salt Water* would follow in 1900.

From Salmon to Shad

In the spring of 1873, Baird named Slack a deputy U.S. fish commissioner, an appointment expanding his responsibilities beyond the borders of New Jersey. His immediate assignment was assisting shad-hatching operations in North Carolina and Virginia and escorting a shipment of 15,000 shad fry to western Pennsylvania for deposit into the Monongahela River, a tributary of the Ohio. The Monongahela fry were hatched at a seasonal station on the Delaware River at Lower Black Eddy, a stretch of slack water near Point Pleasant, Pennsylvania, about 30 miles from Troutdale. In honor of his boss, Slack named the station Camp Baird.[32]

Because shad are "broadcast spawners" whose eggs incubate quickly in the water column, they were hatched directly in the river. This involved setting up a bankside tent camp for several weeks during the run. Shad were netted and the ripe eggs and milt stripped and mixed in a pail of water. Once fertilized, the ova went into "hatchers"—floating boxes suspended in the current for gentle agitation. Incubation took five days or less. A young shad absorbed its yolk sac in three days. Although still "mere shred[s] of albumen," in Fred Mather's apt phrase, fry could now be released into the river to augment natural spawning or placed in containers for shipping to distant waters. Camp Baird's 1873 operations lasted two weeks and hatched 448,000 fry.[33]

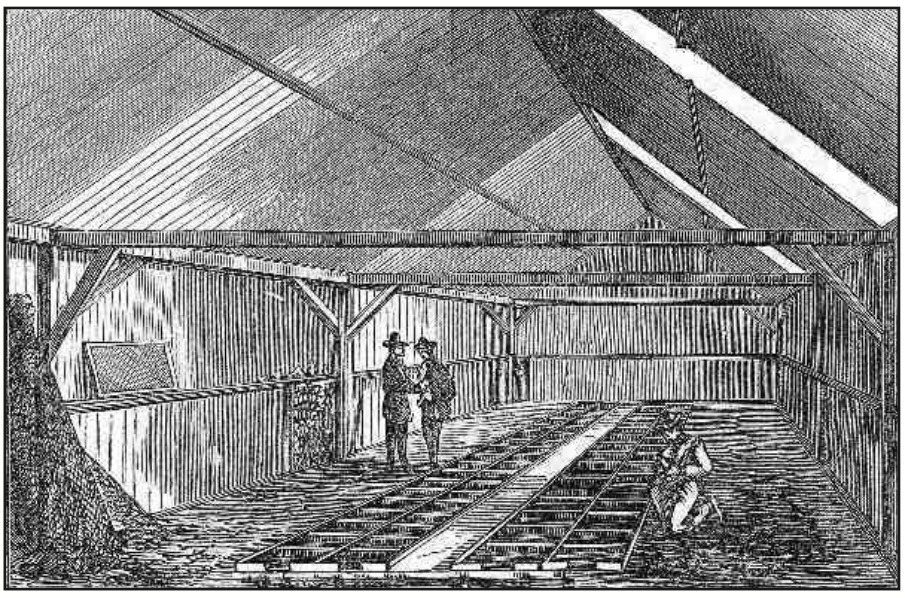
The next year Slack and his shad team set up camp on June 25. They had a good run of fish and by June 29 had hatched 100,000 fry. Slack dashed off a note to colleagues at the Academy of Natural Sciences urging anyone curious about "the modus operandi of impregnating and hatching spawn" to join them.[34] Whether anyone did isn't known. What we do know is that Slack departed camp on July 2, leaving an assistant in charge, and went home to Troutdale. Probably he was sick, for on July 3, according to a subsequent account, he took to bed, "prostrated . . . by a violent attack of Pleurisy,"[35] an inflammation of the lining of the lungs often associated with pneumonia. Presumably by telegraph, he stayed in touch with Camp Baird until it ceased operations on July 13, having hatched 530,000 fry.[36] By then Slack was gravely ill. He lingered another six weeks and died on 24 August 1874, a month shy of his fortieth birthday.[37]

The Troutdale Hatchery after Slack

Slack's widow, Thirza, was just thirty years old with four children between the ages of five and twelve.[38] She soldiered on, taking on responsibility for the work at Troutdale at least through 1878 and probably for much longer. In 1875 the hatchery, which by now boasted an international reputation, filled orders from England and Scotland for nearly a million brook trout eggs.[39]

Meanwhile, the great Pacific salmon enterprise kept chugging along. According to the New Jersey fisheries commission, in 1877 more than 250,000 ova were "placed in charge of Mrs. J. H. Slack, at her hatching establishment at Bloomsbury" and nursed to fry stage "with very small loss." In 1878, arrangements were made "with Mrs. J. H. Slack for use of her fish-breeding establishment" to process 500,000 eggs, of which 450,000 hatched.[40]

Reviewing the program in their 1883 report, New Jersey's commissioners estimated that since the start of "the experiment" a decade earlier, 2,364,700 fry of both Pacific and Atlantic salmon had been released in the state.[41] Almost certainly, all the Pacific fry were raised at Troutdale, as were all but a few of the



Interior of Troutdale's hatching house, from John H. Slack, Practical Trout Culture *(1872).*

Atlantic fry. The vast majority went into the Delaware, the only river to boast any documented returns. Mature salmon were first observed in 1875. The numbers steadily increased through 1878; 1879 had a good run, but regrettably "the experiences of that year were not repeated."[42] In 1880 just a few adults were recorded, and in 1881 a few were reported but not confirmed. As probable cause of the experiment's failure, the commissioners observed "that in the late summer and early autumn, the waters of the Delaware are usually very low, and of a higher temperature than that of rivers to which the salmon is indigenous."[43]

Thirza Slack lived for another fifty-six years; she died in 1930 at the age of eighty-seven.[44] She and her descendants continued the hatchery business into the early twentieth century, but as a sideline to farming, which by 1900 had become the family's main livelihood.[45] In 1912, when New Jersey officials were looking for a place to build a state hatchery, they considered Troutdale but passed it up in favor of another Musconetcong site 20 miles upriver, at Hackettstown.[46]

In 1941 the Slacks sold their entire property to the Warren County (New Jersey) Rod and Gun Club.[47] The hatchery by now was overgrown, and algae and moss choked whatever remained of Dr. Slack's carefully tended ponds. But the spring that had made the hatchery possible in the first place still ran as clear and cold as ever.[48] In 1947 the club leased the hatchery site to a fish culturist named William H. Stanley, and Troutdale—rechristened as the Musky Trout Hatchery—was reborn.[49] Stanley sold out in 1958 to the current owner, Vernon Mancini, who significantly expanded the operation. In a reprise of Troutdale's role in the Delaware salmon stockings of the 1870s, it was the Musky Trout Hatchery that raised the steelhead stocked in the Raritan River a century later.[50]

A Hero of American Fish Culture

In his time, John H. Slack was a prominent figure in what can rightfully be called the heroic age of American fish culture. We can marvel at his efforts, however wrongheaded, to establish salmon in rivers where nature never intended them. He might have achieved the stature of his contemporaries Livingston Stone, Seth Green, and Fred Mather if he hadn't died young and bet on the wrong fish. In 1875, a year after Slack's untimely death, Stone shipped the first eggs of California rainbow trout to Green's hatchery in Caledonia, New York, with more following in 1878.[51] A few years later, Mather began raising brown trout imported from Germany and Scotland at the New York State hatchery in Cold Spring Harbor.[52] By the early twentieth century, rainbows and browns were thriving in much of the eastern United States.[53] Had he lived, Slack would doubtless have been involved in the introduction of both species, and we would recognize him today as a central player in the history of American fisheries. Instead he's mainly a footnote, a man who pursued a quixotic quest that was bound to fail.

J. I. Merritt

The Musky Trout Hatchery, established in 1947 on the same location as Slack's Troutdale Ponds.

ENDNOTES

1. *Report of the Commissioners of Fisheries of the State of New Jersey* (hereafter N.J. Fisheries Report; Trenton), 1878, 15–16; *Trenton Gazette*, 8 April 1878, as quoted in "A Delaware River Salmon," *New York Times*, 11 April 1878. http://query.nytimes.com/mem/archive-free/pdf?res=9D0DE4DA143EE73BBC4952DFB2668383669FDE, accessed 8 June 2010.

2. Compiled from data in N.J. Fisheries Reports, 1871–1875. The Passaic received 63,000 fry and the Hackensack 45,000. The totals should be viewed as approximate because the figures for 1875 aren't specific, stating that "nearly all" of 80,000 fry were deposited in the Delaware, with the rest going into the Raritan and Hackensack; I have arbitrarily assigned 70,000 fry to the Delaware totals and 5,000 each to those of the other two rivers. The first documented stocking of the Delaware with Atlantic salmon occurred in 1870, when Slack planted 200 fry raised from eggs originating with Miramichi River fish. N.J. Fisheries Reports, 1871, 21, and 1874, 19. In 1871, there were separate plantings of Atlantic salmon raised at hatcheries other than Troutdale, one of 12,000 fry and another of 1,000. *United States Commission of Fish and Fisheries, Reports of the Commissioner* (hereafter U.S. Fisheries Report), 1872–1873, 768, and 1877, 36.

3. The rest were stocked in the Susquehanna (61,000); two other New Jersey rivers, the Raritan (52,000) and Passaic (2,000); the Potomac (40,000); and Long Island's Connetquot (30,000). U.S. Fisheries Reports, 1873–1875, 432–33. Baird thought chinook salmon might habituate more easily than Atlantic salmon to southern waters, and, in addition to the Potomac, they were planted in the Rappahannock (Virginia), the Roanoke (North Carolina), and the Mississippi.

4. N.J. Fisheries Report, 1877, 40.

5. Ibid., 1878, 17. The report states that "one large fish" was also taken on the Raritan but none on the Passaic or Hackensack.

6. *Trenton Gazette*, 8 April 1878.

7. Roland Van Arsdale and Pat Moffitt, "100,000 Steelhead on a One-Way Ticket to New Jersey," *Trout* (Fall 1980), 33–36.

8. Jim Merritt, "Planting Fish and Playing God," *Field & Stream* (June 1997), 127–29.

9. *Proceedings of the Academy of Natural Sciences* (1 September 1874), 141 (hereafter Proceedings, ANS). Slack's date of birth was 23 September 1834.

10. *The Medical and Surgical Reporter (Philadelphia)* (1874, vol. 31), 220.

11. Ibid.

12. Proceedings, ANS; Fran Capo, *It Happened in New Jersey* (Guilford, Conn.:

Twodot Press, 2004), 2.

13. Slack (U.S. Fisheries Report, 1873, 459) states that he "fished much in the Delaware," and two N.J. Fisheries Reports (1875, 20, and 1874, 22) refer to his having "caught" and "taken" young salmon on the Musconetcong.

14. J. Robert Norris Jr., "Visiting with Uncle Thad: Thaddeus Norris, 1811–1877," *The American Fly Fisher* (Winter 1995, vol. 21, no. 1), 14–20; Fred Mather, *My Angling Friends* (New York: Forest and Stream, 1901), 41.

15. Thaddeus Norris, *American Fish Culture* (Philadelphia: Porter & Coates, 1868), 287.

16. *Harper's Weekly*, 13 June 1868, 381.

17. J. H. Slack, *Practical Trout Culture* (New York: George E. Woodward, 1872), vi.

18. 1870 U.S. Census, Franklin Township, New Jersey.

19. *Harper's Weekly*, 13 June 1868, 381. There was also a female trout named Lady Douglas; one side of her head was light and the other dark. Her name may allude to (the two-faced?) Lady Douglas Sheffield, a cousin of Elizabeth I who had a celebrated affair with the queen's favorite courtier and would-be lover, Robert Dudley.

20. Anders Halverson, *An Entirely Synthetic Fish* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 2010), 12–13.

21. Ibid.; N.J. Fisheries Report, 1871, 3. Here and in subsequent reports, Slack's fellow commissioner is almost always listed as B. P. Howell, but the name Benjamin crops up here and there. References to "Howell's" fisheries (N.J. Fisheries Report, 1872, 14–15) suggest he may have operated a commercial shad net.

22. They had three joint meetings (two in 1870 and one in 1871): 17 May 1870, Woodbury; 15 November 1870, Troutdale; and 12 January 1871, Philadelphia (N.J. Fisheries Report, 1871, 3).

23. N.J. Fisheries Report, 1871, 3–5, 21. The actual number of Atlantic salmon fry initially placed in the Delaware in 1870 was 200 (N.J. Fisheries Report, 1874, 19). Hatched from impregnated ova at Troutdale, they were the spawn of Canadian fish taken in the fall of 1869 from the Miramichi River in New Brunswick (N.J. Fisheries Report, 1874, 19, 33–34). The term "fish-police" appears in U.S. Fisheries Report, 1874, 458.

24. Livingston Stone, "Organization of American Fish Culturists' Association," in *Domesticated Trout* (Boston: James R. Osgood, 1872), 319–21. Halverson, *Entirely Synthetic*, 15–16. Fisheries Historical Timeline, http://www.nefsc.noaa.go/history/timeline/1870.html, accessed 29 April 2010. Fred Mather, *Modern Fishculture in Fresh and Salt Water* (New York: Forest and Stream, 1900), 9–10. Mather's account of the founding of the American Fish Culturists' Association (which eventually became the American Fisheries Society, as it is known today) was written thirty years after the fact and is at odds in several particulars with Stone's, written just two years after. Mather states that he, J. H. Collins (Seth Green's business partner), and Slack met in New York City in 1870 to agree on "a scale of prices" (Mather, *Modern Fishculture,* p. 9) for eggs and fry; an expanded group met in Albany the following year "and organized the American Fish Culturists' Association" (Mather, p. 9); Stone's account is clear that the organization dated from the 1870 meeting. Mather goes on to say that the association sent a representative to Washington, D.C., to meet with Baird, "then Assistant Secretary of the Smithsonian" (Mather, p. 10; he was, in fact, the secretary), and Congress to press for the creation of a federal fisheries commission similar to the state commissions. In reality, the federal commission, founded for the narrower purpose of investigating declining coastal fisheries in New England, was already in place, with Baird at its head; the association did, however, send a representative to argue successfully for federal stocking of public waters. See Halverson for details.

25. U.S. Fisheries Report, 1873, xxiv–xxv; N.J. Fisheries Report, 1872, 5. The first source says 7,000 ova survived, the second 6,000.

26. U.S. Fisheries Report, 1873, xxii. More specifically, the report states that "only four or five thousand were sound."

27. N.J. Fisheries Report, 1873, 23.

28. U.S. Fisheries Reports, 1874–1875, 431–32.

29. Ibid., 433.

30. Ibid., 434. Totals for Pacific fry placements from the 1873 shipment: Delaware, 138,000; Susquehanna, 50,000; Raritan, 47,000; Potomac, 40,000; Connetquot, 30,000. Some 50,000 fry were still in Troutdale's ponds at the time of the report.

31. N.J. Fisheries Report, 1874, 21–23. Slack, *Practical Trout Culture,* 33.

32. U.S. Fisheries Report, 1873, 409–11. The Monongahela plantings were unsuccessful, as were attempts to introduce shad to other interior rivers. Shad as well as striped bass were successfully introduced in California.

33. Mather, *Modern Fishculture,* 195–97. U.S. Fisheries Report, 1873, 412.

34. Archives, ANS, Collection no. 567.

35. N.J. Fisheries Report, 1874, 11.

36. Ibid., 11–12.

37. Proceedings, ANS, 1 September 1874, 141. Slack was buried in a local cemetery. In 1894 his remains were moved to Woodlands Cemetery in Philadelphia. His widow, Thirza, was buried next to him in 1930 (Woodlands Cemetery, telephone communication, 12 July 2010).

38. U.S. Census, 1870. I've extrapolated the children's ages, which should be regarded as approximate.

39. N.J. Fisheries Report, 1875, 21.

40. Of the 450,000 fry, the Delaware received 150,000. The balance were placed in the Maurice, Mullica, Great Egg Harbor, Raritan, Hackensack, and Passaic rivers; Alloways and Raccoon creeks; and Greenwood and Shepherds lakes (N.J. Fisheries Report, 1878, 18 and 19). The N.J. Fisheries Reports for 1874, 1875, 1877, and 1878 refer specifically to Troutdale as the recipient of Stone's shipments. The 1883 report (page 10) says the Delaware was stocked with Pacific salmon every year from 1879 through 1882 but is silent on where these fry were hatched.

41. N.J. Fisheries Report, 1883, 10.

42. Ibid.

43. N.J. Fisheries Report, 1883, 10–11. The commissioners' totals are for the nine-year period from 1873, when New Jersey began partnering with the U.S. Fish Commission, through 1882 and don't include earlier, privately funded stockings by Slack and several others. A few fish returning to the Delaware were clearly identified as Atlantic salmon, but the record is mute on whether any runs included chinooks. Sporadic stocking of chinooks continued after 1882. In 1884, the U.S. Fish Commission planted 100,000 fry in three Delaware tributaries: the Musconetcong, Pequest, and Paulinskill (N.J. Fisheries Report, 1885, 20–21). The Pennsylvania fisheries commission did occasional stockings into the early 1900s, and some returning fish were observed (Van Arsdale and Moffitt, "100,000 Steelhead," 33). In a telephone conversation, Moffitt told me he obtained this information from Pennsylvania fisheries commission reports.

44. Thirza Anderson Slack, born 27 August 1843, died 23 November 1930 (e-mail communication from Dr. Slack's great-great-great grandson John Hamilton Slack, 7 September 2009; he is the sixth, and youngest, consecutive person so named in the family line).

45. U.S. Census, Franklin Township, N.J., 1900. Dr. Slack's great-grandson, also named John Hamilton Slack, still lives and farms in the area. As a boy he resided in the ancestral home, moving out in 1941 at age eleven. He recalls hearing that as a young man his father (yet another John Hamilton Slack, who went by his middle name) and widowed grandmother (Nettie, a daughter of Dr. Slack's son John) were still in the hatchery business, perhaps as late as 1920.

46. R. E. Stahlnecker, "Warren County Sportsmen Buy Slack Farm," *Morning Free Press* (Easton, Pennsylvania), 2 April 1941.

47. Ibid. The club still owns the property and uses the house Slack built as its headquarters.

48. Ibid.

49. "W. H. Stanley, Sr., built trout hatchery"; obituary, *Easton, Pennsylvania Express,* 16 July 1985, B6.

50. The hatchery's website, http://www.muskytrouthatchery.com, includes the text of the 1868 *Harper's Weekly* article.

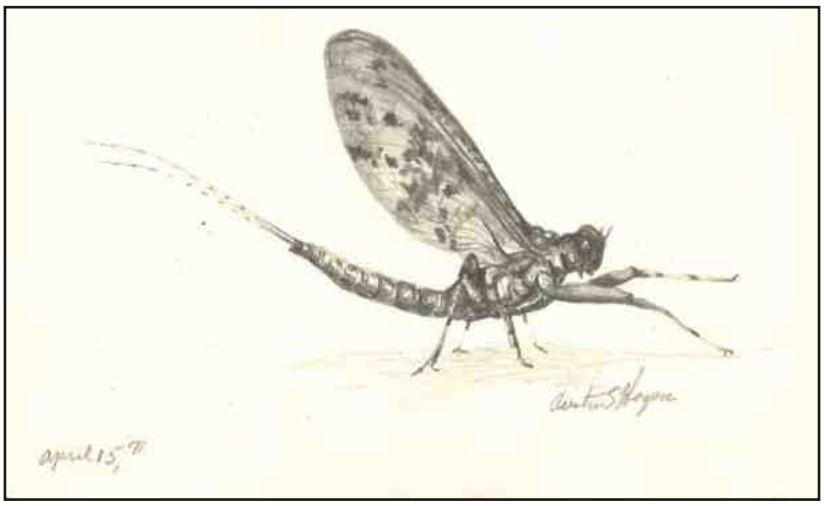
51. Robert Behnke, "Livingston Stone, J. B. Campbell, and the Origins of Hatchery Rainbow Trout," *The American Fly Fisher* (Fall 1990, vol. 16, no. 3), 21.

52. Robert J. Behnke, "Brown Trout," *Trout* (Winter 1986), 46–47.

53. Robert J. Behnke, *Trout and Salmon of North America* (New York: The Free Press, 2002), 256; Behnke states that "through many subsequent stockings" after 1883, "brown trout rapidly became established in most of the larger trout streams of North America" (256). According to Hugh R. MacCrimmon, as a result of stockings in the 1870s and 1880s, at least ten U.S. states now have self-sustaining rainbow populations (Hugh R. MacCrimmon, "World Distribution of Rainbow Trout [*Salmo gairdneri*]," *Journal of the Fisheries Research Board of Canada* [1971, vol. 28, no. 5], 666–67.

On Some Philosophies of Collecting: Provenance of the Austin S. Hogan Collection

by Austin W. Hogan



A pencil sketch on 3 x 5–inch notepad by Austin S. Hogan, done as an eye exercise while recovering from cataract surgery in 1971.

Austin S. Hogan, my father, maintained notes recording his progress as a fly tier. He mounted flies for displays, organized flies into period collections, and prepared what he called "chapters" of his research notes. Most of these notes fell under the broad title of *An Angler's American History,* and several were published by the American Museum of Fly Fishing in this journal. My father passed things to me—copies of his chapters, fly books filled with his recent tying, and small boxes filled with flies—each time we saw each other during the 1960s and 1970s. He also mailed flies to me when I worked afield at places with good streams. Included with the flies were his suggestions on how to fish them and, sometimes, tying materials. At the time of his death in 1985, I held twenty-six folders enclosing his notes, which he titled as chapter drafts of his *An Angler's American History.* Some of these were published as portions of articles in the *American Fly Fisher,* but he never assembled a completed draft of the book. Besides these bound notes, I have a notebook containing dated mounts of his early tying, two bound scrapbooks of some classic articles on tying, hundreds of his sketches and watercolors, a ring binder containing correspondence and flies from some distinguished tiers, and a footlocker filled with flies collected or tied by him.

The sum of all this is a very interesting and enjoyable collection of terminal tackle. The material part of the collection is greatly enhanced by Austin S.'s handwritten and typed notes indicating the origin of many items.

In January 1966, I did some field research in cloud physics and snowfall in the Rocky Mountains near Steamboat Springs, Colorado. I purchased a trunk—similar to a GI footlocker, but with a metal exterior and reinforced corners—to carry my scientific instruments. On my return, I put a package of moth flakes in the trunk and began storing in it the flies and materials sent me by Austin S. I won't take credit for expert archival selection; I used items that were available that turned out to give optimum performance. Forty-two years, many moves, and many openings later, all of the items stored in this trunk seem to retain near pristine condition (Figure 1, page 10).

A Ladder of Provenance

The collecting of sporting arms and fishing tackle is still in its infancy. There are increasing numbers of rod, reel, casting-plug, and spoon collectors, and they have numerous books and reprints of old tackle catalogs to guide them. These collectors have adopted the standards of military arms collectors; they seek maker's marks and model identification on the item, and they value "factory originality." A few historic flies, plus those made by distinguished tiers, are sought by museums and serious collectors. These are really works of art, and "factory originality" cannot be a factor in establishing the desirability of them. Collectability of individually tied flies requires some form of provenance connecting the fly with its tier, an era, and perhaps to the original angler who cast or trolled it as well.

I would like to propose a nine-tiered ladder of provenance for flies, nymphs, bucktails, and streamers to guide the collector. The term *fly* will be used to include wet and dry flies, nymphs, streamers, and bucktails; the holder is usually, but not always, the owner.

1. A fly tied, then mounted or carded in the presence of the holder, with the date noted. This primary provenance can be extended to another holder if the transfer is noted or is done publicly.

   Or a mounted, carded, or packaged fly contained in a postmarked and unopened envelope or package bearing the address of the recipient and the return address of the tier. Unopened correspondence containing the tier's work would be equivalent to this. Such a find could be opened before the directors of the museum and might be considered defining examples of a tier's work.
2. A fly (or several) attached to a letter or mount signed by the tier and still in possession of the recipient. A chain of provenance to later holders can be extended as in number 1.
3. An example of the tiers' work, carded, mounted, or packaged with identification of the work by the tier, or an example of a tier's work packaged with identification of the tier by the person who received the work from the original tier.
4. Custom or commercial examples of the tiers' work attached to a card or mount annotated by the tier.
5. Custom or commercial examples of the tier's work attached to a printed card; the original wrap or package enhances this if done by the tier.
6. Custom or commercial examples of a tier's work accompanied by its original card and packaging.
7. Examples of a tier's work accompanied with identification by another tier of the era.
8. Examples of a tier's work accompanied by an established chain of holders.
9. Attributions of a tier's identity, accompanied by a many-year but incomplete history of holders.

Figures 2 through 9 illustrate examples of this proposed ladder of provenance.

It has been very enjoyable to study the Austin S. Hogan collection and attempt to place the flies, nymphs, streamers, and bucktails from several periods and by many tiers into these provenance categories. There are packages that appear to be experiments with a full spectrum of nymphs or streamers on one hundred hooks of the same size. There are other experiments in which Austin S. exchanged colors within a pattern.

Provenance Mysteries

Two important mounted collections are not, thus far, identifiable with respect to time and tier(s).

There are several pages of masterfully tied salmon flies, streamers, and wet flies headed by a page titled "The Dan Brenan Collection of Trout and Salmon Flies c. 1903" (Figure 10). The Brenan collection was removed from a fly book labeled with Brenan's name and address, but with no indication of the origin of the flies found in the book. Some may have been tied by a young Brenan; most of the large salmon flies appear to be the work of a skilled commercial tier. The source remains unknown, but the date of 1903 appears to be established.

Dan Brenan was the biographer of George Washington Sears (a *Forest and Stream* contributor who wrote under the pen name of Nessmuk). Brenan compiled the Adirondack letters of George Washington Sears in *Canoeing the Adirondacks with Nessmuk,* which was published by the Adirondack Museum shortly after Brenan's death in 1962. A very brief biography of Brenan (1885–1962) appears in the book; Brenan identifies himself as a writer of angling literature. I have not yet found other work written by Brenan or found a pseudonym for him in any of Austin S.'s notes.

Small in the Eye of a River by Frank Mele (The Lyons Press, 1996) provides some biographical information on Brenan, who was Mele's fishing companion and supplier of rods and flies. Brenan ran a tackle shop and made fly rods in Syracuse, New York. He appears to have been a very early collector of tackle and flies. An inquiry to the Adirondack Museum indicates that Brenan donated many items while he was preparing the book on Nessmuk. He frequently corresponded with Austin S. and gave or sold the c. 1903 collection to him in about 1959, judging by its placement in the Frigidaire file (Austin S.'s chronological ring binder; see Figure 3 on page 11 for further description).

The second collection that has stumped me with respect to provenance consists of eleven Halfords. These have been carded and identified by Austin S. and the carded flies mounted on black background with an acetate overlay in the file (Figure 11). They are labeled and numbered in Austin S.'s hand on the card in an "antique" brown ink that he may have mixed himself. I originally thought that he had tied these as replicas, but my recent study of them with magnification indicates they are probably of pre–World War II English origin.

The letter, flies, sketch, and watercolor (Figure 12) that accompany this article represent a sample of Austin S. Hogan's work before the formation of the American Museum of Fly Fishing. I continue to research the provenance of the collection as I prepare to donate it to the museum.

Austin S. Hogan (left) and David Ledlie, both former editors of this journal, examine one of the museum's reels in this undated photo.

Photos by Austin W. Hogan

Figure 1. A view of one side of the top tray of the trunk that has held a large collection of flies, nymphs, and streamers given to me by my father between about 1962 and his death in 1985. Two notebooks in the case contain mounted displays of his flies, nymphs, and streamers with his annotations from 1950 to 1965. These displays show his early work and the work of several renowned tiers of that time.

The top tray of the trunk shows many small boxes labeled with tiers' names. Note the small white box in the lower left corner labeled "Tied by Harold N Gibbs, 71 Sowams Rd Barrington R I Gibbs Striper No 2 Jassid # 24," written in Austin S. Hogan's hand. We have here the beginning of some good provenance: a Gibbs Striper identified by hook size with identification on the box that it was tied by the originator.

I have a strong bias toward Austin S.'s tying, but after examining the collection as passed to me over these forty-plus years, I look on Harold Gibbs's work as some of the finest of the twentieth century. The provenance on these examples of Gibbs's work is the result of personal contact between Austin S. and Harold N. and the former's obvious admiration of the latter's work.

Figure 2. Hallie Galaise was one of the ladies trained to tie by Mary Orvis Marbury, and she was the last one still active with the Orvis Company when Austin S. Hogan requested her to tie these in 1954. Galaise is pictured tying, without a vise, in *The Orvis Story* (Austin Hogan and Paul Schullery, 1981). Austin S. Hogan noted Galaise's name on the package at the time and labeled the package as shown when he passed this part of his collection on to me. This is not quite a perfect example of primary provenance as the full date is not entered.

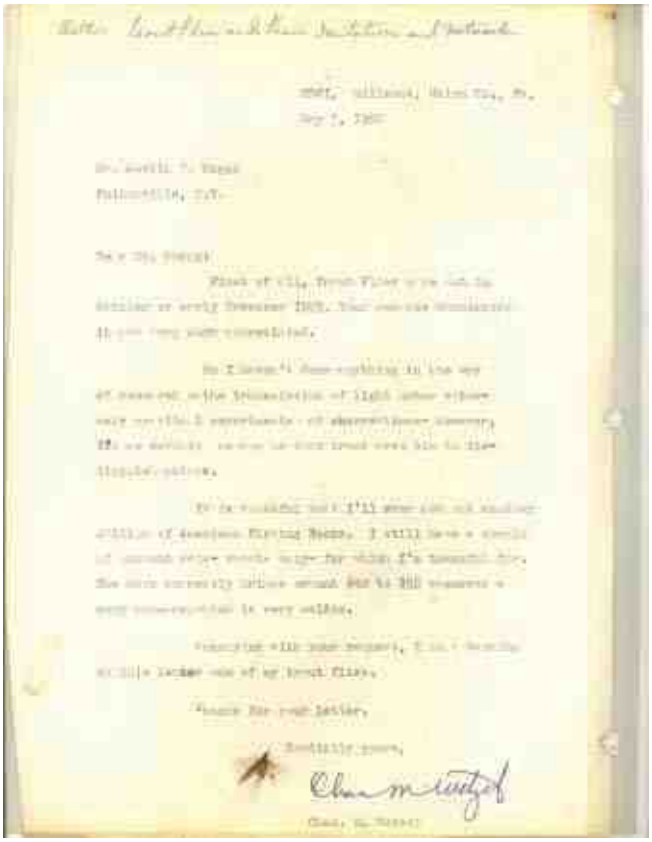


Figure 3. A dated and signed letter from Charles M. Wetzel with a fly of his tying attached. Wetzel is known for his writing but tied for his own fishing. The letter and fly have been enclosed in the transparent folder for fifty years. The letter and fly were not commercially exchanged, but have been passed from the recipient (Austin S.) to the present holder (Austin W.).

The letter and fly from Wetzel are mounted in a firm acetate pocket file jacket and filed in approximate chronological order in a leatherette bound ring binder. This ring binder was originally a Frigidaire salesman's product file, and we refer to it frequently as "the Frigidaire file." It provided fifty years of excellent protection to the letters, photos, and mounted fly collections that are stored in it. The attachment of the fly to the signed and dated letter identifies the work of the tier; a positive evaluation of the chain of custody from recipient (Austin S.) to current holder (Austin W.) should provide provenance at the second level described above.

Figure 4. A Rangeley Smelt tied, carded, and dated by Austin S. Hogan, 1958. This Rangeley Smelt is in the binder containing many of Austin S. Hogan's early tying experiments; it is a bit unusual because it is named. The streamer is mounted on a card with Scotch tape and has been protected with a transparent overlay as noted in the description of the Wetzel letter. The card is annotated and dated in Austin S.'s hand and contains a material list for the pattern. This is a clear and unique example of the third provenance category: it is carded, annotated, and dated by the tier and remains in the possession of the person (the author) who originally received it from the tier.

Figure 5. A Warden's Worry, tied, carded, and annotated by H. Wendell Folkins. It is attached to an unsigned letter from Folkins. This is an example of commercial work. He annotated the card with pattern and size in his own handwriting, making it an example of provenance category 4 proposed above. He frequently entered the size and patterns on his cards by hand, as shown on several examples in the Fridgidaire file.

Figure 6. A. I. "Pal" Alexander was a member and officer of the United Fly Tyers (UFT). The UFT met in a tying room rented at Mechanics Hall in Boston. Alexander was an accomplished tier who provided examples for displays and published illustrations. Pal Alexander and Austin S. Hogan met frequently at the UFT. This original Gray Ghost, tied by Mrs. Carrie G. Stevens, came from Pal Alexander's collection and was mailed to me in March 1966.

The Gray Ghost streamer is removed from its original transparent wrapper and pattern identification card and placed beside it in a transparent coin collector's plastic case. This was a frequent preservation and display technique used to present high-quality flies for exhibition in the 1960s and 1970s. The sponge rubber matting in these cases oxidized with the passage of time. This photo was made through the case, which had remained stored in the original mailing envelope until 2007. The rubber matting is well decomposed, but it contaminated only the hook point and head winding in this instance.

This Gray Ghost would be considered provenance category 6, as it has been removed from its original card and wrapper but is accompanied by these items. The Gray Ghost's provenance is enhanced a bit as it was identified by a contemporary tier (Pal Alexander) and proceeded from that collection to that of the author, where it has remained for forty-four years. It can never reach provenance level 5, as it is detached from its card, but it should be considered the highest provenance level of flies detached from the original card.

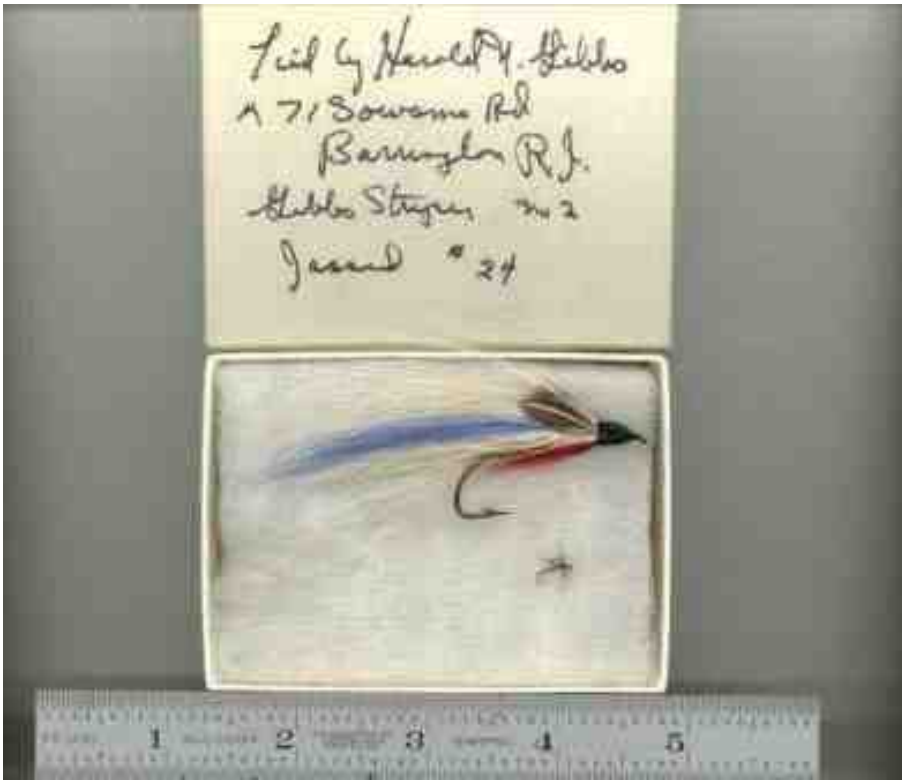


Figure 7. A Gibbs Striper and a size 24 Jassid, given by Harold Gibbs to Austin S. Hogan at a United Fly Tyers (UFT) meeting in 1965. Harold Gibbs and Austin S. Hogan frequently met at UFT meetings. Gibbs gave these two flies to Austin S. but did not annotate them. Austin S. noted Gibbs as the tier, as well as the patterns and sizes on the box; this establishes the proposed provenance level 7 for the pair.

Figure 8. Harold Gibbs identified this pair as tied by Rube Cross in his own handwriting. Austin S. Hogan identified them as a gift from Gibbs and noted the date; he further established the chain of ownership by identifying Gibbs and the date of succession. This is an example of proposed provenance category 8; it remains as part of this collection intact since 1965.

Figure 9. Four flies to gut attributed to Elizabeth Benjamin of Lycoming Creek, Pennsylvania. The origin and the tier of these was attributed by Austin S. Hogan in 1960. The specimens were mounted, labeled, and filed with some prints and articles about fishing in Pennsylvania at that time. I have found no additional source for the attribution. Fifty years have passed without challenge to that attribution, but this does not establish provenance beyond the lowest level.

Figure 10. Six salmon flies from the Dan Brenan c. 1903 collection photographed against a red Bristol board background. Austin S. Hogan may have touched up the heads on the lower left and lower right. Dan passed these flies to Austin S. in the fly book that remains in the collection. Austin S. carded some of these, mounted the others on typewriter paper, and inserted them in acetate covers in the loose-leaf notebook. There was no attribution other than the heading on the initial page of the collection, but most of the mounts were organized by size and whether eyed or fly-to-gut. There are about one hundred wet flies and streamers in this collection.

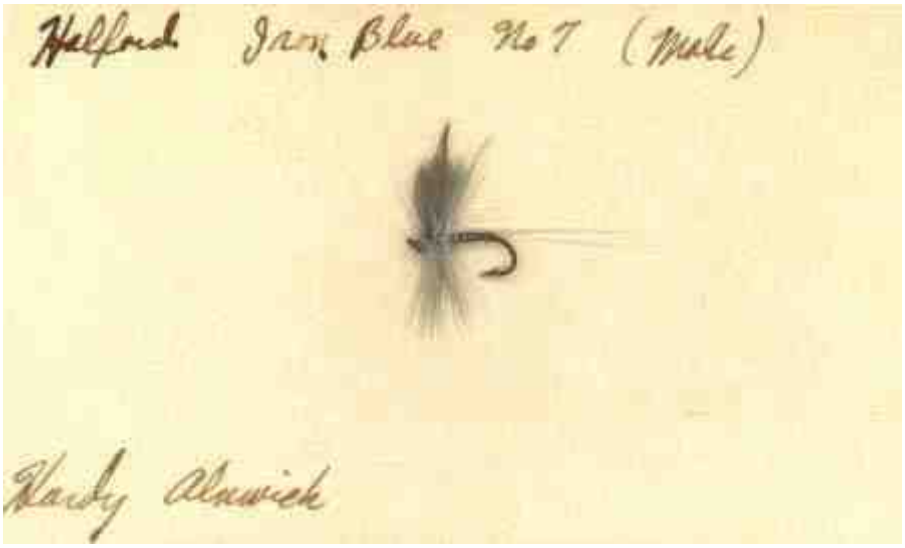


Figure 11. A Halford Iron Blue No 7 (male) tied on a Hardy Alnwick hook, as identified and labeled by Austin S. Hogan. The identification of Halford Iron Blue No. 7 (male) by Austin S. is in near agreement with the Halford illustrations in the 1937 Hardy catalog and the illustration in Plate VI of the 1923 edition of Halford's *Modern Development of the Dry Fly* (Houghton, Mifflin and Co., 1923). The illustration in Halford notes "Flies Dressed by C Farlow and Co, London" (facing page 39, plate VI). The Iron Blue Male is cataloged as No. 18 and has a few red turns behind the eye of the hook in both the Hardy and Farlow prints. Halford's instructions (page 39) indicate that this should be "three close turns of horsehair dyed dark Van Dyke brown," which is a brick rather than bright red. Several other Halfords mounted by Austin S. also vary in noted number. Halford cites other sellers of his patterns in *Modern Development of the Dry Fly,* but I have yet to find Austin S.'s source of the numbers.

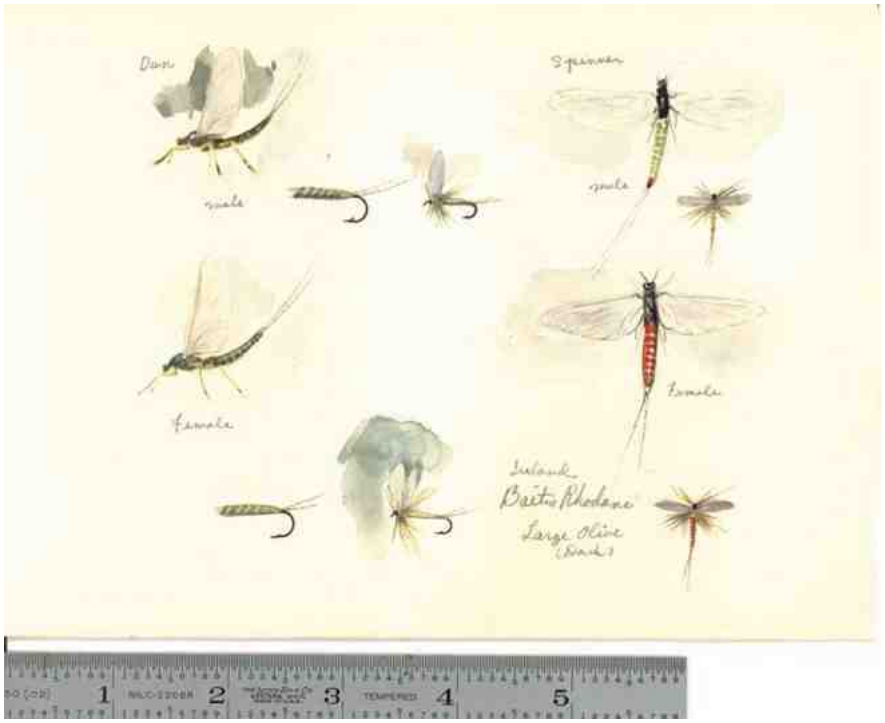


Figure 12. This watercolor sketch was found between the pages of Austin S. Hogan's copy of *The Modern Development of the Dry Fly.* It is representative of many pencil and watercolor sketches done by Austin S. to illustrate his ideas in a letter or to make a note to himself in extracting written information.

Austin S. apparently studied Halford's book quite carefully. The little 6 x 8–inch painted sketch was found between the pages. Unexpected findings like this has made searching for his forms of provenance—which he used in replicating early tiers' work without support of color photographic records—very rewarding to me.

River Police: Early Game Wardens on Michigan's Au Sable River

by Bryon Borgelt

On the Au Sable River in Grayling.
Used with permission from the Crawford County Library System.

In 1878, the Michigan Sportsmen's Association called the Michigan Fish Commission's attention to declining numbers of grayling in the Au Sable River.[1] In the four short years since Thaddeus Norris announced the bounty of Michigan's indigenous cold-water game fish to America's angling public, overfishing, logging, and nonnative competition from brook trout threatened the fragile fishery. The association's call prompted the commission to expand its regulation beyond the commercial whitefish industry to the growing sportfishing industry, centered on Michigan's grayling, brook trout, and bass. New legislation, along with game wardens' increased police powers, sought to prevent the annihilation of one of America's greatest game fish, the Michigan grayling, *Thymallus tricolor.*

Michigan's game laws and game warden system found their origins in the declining whitefish industry of the 1870s. The population's decline was traced to overfishing and urban growth. Artificial fish propagation was the conservation method of the day, and a private effort developed among the Detroit whitefish fleet.[2] It became apparent that the environmental dilemma facing the fishing industry could not be solved through private efforts alone. Instead, the state government legislated conservation efforts and collaborated with private hatcheries to broaden its efforts in fish conservation.

The Michigan state legislature had convened in 1873 and had immediately addressed the commercial-fishing issue. That same year, with the support of Governor John Bagley, the Michigan Fish Commission was formed. The first board consisted of Governor Bagley, George Clark, and George Jerome Niles. The primary focus of the group was to immediately address the whitefish stocks in the form of artificial propagation. Soon, however, prodded by private conservation organizations that sprung up out of concern for the endangered grayling, the commission redefined the status of commercial and recreational fish. In doing so, Michigan criminalized previous customary fishing practices.

Conservation among sportsmen has a mixed past. Historian John F. Reiger's *American Sportsmen and the Origins of Conservation* (1975) stated that sportsmen were dedicated to protecting nature. He wrote:

> Farmers and ranchers made poor nature lovers, seeing wildlife only as competitors or sources of profit. Sportsmen, on the other hand, regarded most animals and birds with nonutilitarian motives. Not depending on nature for a livelihood, sportsmen were the only large group of Americans who came to woods and fields for mainly recreational and aesthetic reasons. It is no wonder, then, that they would take the initiative in preserving nonsporting species as well as those traditionally pursued as game.[3]

Game conservation laws were relatively new to Michigan and America at the turn of the twentieth century. Before the mid-1800s, few states had game and fish laws. Most human populations were used to hunting and fishing unfettered

A better-than-typical 1912 day: fishing demonstrates the benefits of the state's hatchery. Used with permission from the Crawford County Library System.

by state and local restrictions. Fishing for local inhabitants not only provided a little rest and relaxation, but also food for the table. Market hunters and fishers hunted and fished for pay. Not all local inhabitants were interested in the joyous pleasures of casting a fly rod for small trout; instead, they looked for more reliable angling methods. In 1873, Michigan closed inland waterways to netting during the months of March, April, and May.[4] This was one of the earliest state fish and game regulations. In 1891, the use of spears, dynamite, explosives, and artificial lights was prohibited.[5]

Threats to Michigan's Game Fish

A tradition of angling and hunting, regulated by custom and guided by natural observation, had kept game and fish populations in check. The onset of modern technology, combined with a surge in population growth and expanding markets, necessitated the creation of state fish and game laws. Hunters and fishers serving the urban markets of Chicago, Detroit, and Toledo deployed the newest technology in order to capitalize on growing demand. Pothunters, as they were called, played their role in the grayling and passenger pigeon's extinction. New technology in the form of guns and nets allowed for larger kills in the fields and streams. In 1875, laws aimed at market fishermen banned the selling and buying of fish during closed seasons.[6] Just two years before this law was passed, the fishing for brook trout and grayling was restricted to a season between June 1 and October 1.[7] Also in 1875, the sale of brook trout and grayling to out-of-state parties was outlawed. Michigan reiterated the ban on out-of-state sales of brook trout and whatever grayling one could find in 1907, and also added bass to the regulation.[8] The market and local subsistence fishermen certainly took a toll on the state's resources.

Just as responsible for the destruction of Michigan fish and game was the rush of adventurous sporting men. Railroads and a changing economy of the industrial late 1800s allowed both the convenience and time to take to the woods and streams of northern Michigan. Their destruction of fish and game in the name of sport caused widespread damage, perhaps more so than the pothunter. Every week during the season, fishermen departed from cities throughout the Midwest on trains to Grayling. There, scores of fishers set out with their parties and their guides to take part in an angling tradition. Every fish of legal size was kept in the era before size restrictions and creel limits. Some fish were fried in bacon grease over campfires, but most were packed in salt, or worse, buried in the sand along the banks. Sportfishermen of the time often blamed the pothunters and the local subsistence fishers but neglected to look in the mirror and take responsibility for their own actions.

According to Reiger, sportsmen followed an unwritten moral code for their streamside conduct. He suggested that leaders such as George Bird Grinnell (1849–1938) and Charles Hallock (1834–1917) promoted the English fishing and hunting practices that emphasized sportsmanship and not the harvest of meat for the home or the market. Three classes of Au Sable anglers emerged as the river reached national prominence in the last quarter of the nineteenth century. The first contained local farmers and laborers who mostly fished for subsistence and did not adhere to the new laws coming out of Lansing. The second group was semilocal; the majority were nouveau riche industrialists who owned property in the form of a vacation home or lodge. They followed and helped to direct many of the state's conservation laws. Finally, the third group was made up of middle-class fishing tourists. Some fished for

Private parties started planting rainbow trout in the Au Sable in 1874. Ten years later, after it was determined that a viable grayling population no longer existed in the system, the state began yearling brook trout plantings. Used with permission from the Lovells Township Historical Society.

sport and others for the table; they were a mixed group. Some supported conservation, others did not. Like so many spawning trout trying to protect their redds, the competition created turf wars.

In the battle for control of the local waters, sportsmen had the upper hand. Personal, business, and political connections and influence allowed them to direct conservation measures aimed at treating fish and game as commodities rather than sustenance. Efforts along the Au Sable combined three stages of game conservation. Stage one sought to reduce the level of killing to protect game for the specific special interest group. Sportsmen anglers achieved this by banning means other than hook and line for fishing. Stage two involved the sentimental protection of game. This called for the protection of game for their aesthetic pleasure. Bag limits first went into effect in 1903 with a creel limit of fifty game fish. At that time food fish, such as walleye or perch, were unregulated. The third stage focused on economic protection. Grayling and trout were viewed as resources for tourism. Money spent on the resource was viewed as an insurance policy on the asset for its future existence.[9] The Au Sable, Michigan's most popular trout tourist destination, was the only stream in Michigan to carry an 8-inch limit on rainbow, brown, and brook trout in 1901.[10]

William Butts Mershon, northern Michigan's leading conservationist and one of the larger trout-water property owners on the Au Sable system, favored the final stage of game conservation. He disagreed with locals, farmers, and even the Michigan Fish Commission for their view that fish served as a food source. In his mind, the brook trout had a higher calling as a sport fish and as ". . . the largest interest the public has in these natural resources that are so attractive to non-residents who come to Michigan to spend their money because of the fishing, boating, sailing and outing in the forest and stream."[11] The fish were a resource that brought anglers and their money to the towns and villages along the Au Sable. In order to keep that revenue flowing, measures for the protection of the resource needed to be passed and enforced.

Forest and Stream Watchmen

Enforcement of the state laws proved difficult. Game wardens were on the front line of state conservation. The protection of game and fish and the prevention of forest fires were the main duties of these wardens. Wardens were first appointed by the governor in 1873 and were paid an annual salary of $1,200. Representing the people of Michigan, wardens could bring any violator of state game laws to court in any county with the same power as an attorney general. To conduct their investigations, wardens were allowed to:

> Search any person and examine any boat, conveyance, vehicle, fish box, fish basket, game bag or game coat, or any other receptacle for game or fish, when he has good reason to believe that he will thereby secure evidence of the violation of the law; and any hindrance or interference or attempt at hindrance or interference with such search and examination, shall be prima facie evidence of a violation of the law. . .[12]

William Mershon's High Banks Lodge on his 1,520-acre property on the North Branch of the Au Sable, purchased in 1905. Used with permission from the Lovells Township Historical Society.

Wardens were given the same power as police and could arrest without warrant any person deemed to be in violation of state game and fish laws.

The new warden system furnished private fish and game clubs with their own deputized managers. The law stated, "The said game and fish wardens may be employed by individuals, clubs, and corporations interested in the enforcement of the fish and game laws . . ."[13] Whereas in other states, clubs hired individuals to manage private waters, in Michigan they employed and deputized individuals of their choice to police private waters. Any transgressions against the law or any interference with the duties of the warden could result in a minimum $10 fine and a court hearing. Those who could not pay the fine were to be held in jail until the fine was paid.[14] This also meant that private citizens and organizations had the ability to make sure that state laws were carried out on public and private waters of their concern, all financed through private money. Wardens were either privately or locally financed until 1913 when Michigan started its out-of-state fishing license and began paying for them through these fees.[15]

Game wardens loyal to state laws were the surest method of conservation. Without game wardens, locals were reluctant to turn their neighbors in. A report to the state mentioned that retaliation was a problem on the North Branch. Mershon wrote about out-of-season fishing:

> A gentleman from Grayling told me yesterday that within a week he had seen three trout in the possession of a man on the North Branch that weighed 4 lbs. in all and these three trout were taken out of the North Branch near the bridge at Lovells; that they were fishing right along; and that he had not dared to make a complaint for fear they would burn up his mill.[16]

Additional complaints indicated that individuals still used dynamite to fish. Dynamiting had long been outlawed. Fear of retaliation no doubt had an impact on those who wished to enforce the laws.

While retaliation was one factor that worked against the game-warden system and state laws, the reluctance of local courts to hold game violators accountable also limited the scope of the conservation laws. One group of Au Sable deer poachers benefited from the local judiciary. Although fines could have totaled $50 per offender, the local "weak-kneed justice" fined the poachers $10.[17] The judge kept the fine to the minimum amount allowed by law, suggesting that

By the late 1890s, Au Sable logging scoured the streambed and silted the water, weakening the threatened grayling's existence. Used with permission from the Fuller's North Branch Outing Club.

such infractions were of relatively minor concern.

Historian Karl Jacoby detailed the work of game wardens working in New York's Adirondack Park. He described the relationship as it developed between game wardens and the local population they were supposed to police. The Adirondacks were surprisingly similar to the Au Sable region. Both had witnessed the quick and transient economy of unregulated logging in the nineteenth century. Outdoor recreation tourism sprung up in the wake of the lumber industry. Wealthy urban industrialists purchased lands, lakes, and stream-front property. Private clubs and lodges appeared to serve the sportsmen and their desire for productive hunting and fishing. The local population was dependent on the new industry, but also used the traditional methods of a subsistence economy. Rivers provided fresh fish, and the forest provided wild meat, berries, and nuts. In 1872, as a response to environmental threats, conservation from the outside in the form of state laws sought to regulate Adirondack land and water usage. "Law and its antithesis—lawlessness—are therefore the twin axes around which the history of conservation revolves," wrote Jacoby. "To achieve its vision of a rational, state-managed landscape, conservation erected a comprehensive new body of rules governing the use of the environment. But to create new laws also meant to create new crimes."[18] Dynamiting and fishing out of season had been accepted practices in both New York and Michigan before the states outlawed such practices. Some locals followed the new laws, but others continued their traditions by defying the laws and an institutionalized concept of conservation.

Both conservationists and locals agreed on one thing: the best game wardens were local game wardens because, according to Jacoby, they knew the landscape and the people. They were familiar with the habits of the local fish and game as well as those who hunted and fished them. They also knew the likely violators. The need to find a local man to carry out the warden job was evident in Mershon's desire for someone who knew the area and who would not have a problem enforcing the law. The two men whom Mershon advocated for the most, E. Purchase and Rube Babbitt, were both natives of the area and knew every bend and twist in the Au Sable and its branches. Local fishers and hunters *also* wanted one of their own to carry out the warden job because, in their minds, the best wardens were those who were reluctant to enforce the state laws or to prosecute offenders. The best wardens might offer a warning or suggest that someone not be caught fishing out of season. Locals often sought methods to control game wardens who would not cooperate on their terms. Jacoby wrote that local tales of accommodating game wardens were "an expression of how locals thought the relationship between foresters [i.e., game wardens] and local people *should* function—[tales] were likely employed as a way to reinforce community solidarity while also nudging present foresters [game wardens] toward more accommodating modes of behavior."[19]

One method of control on the Au Sable was for local government to refuse to reimburse the game warden for expenses incurred during the enforcement of his job. According to state law, counties or private organizations were responsible for the county warden's salary, but the county had to reimburse the local warden for expenses.[20] In January 1906, the Crawford County Board of Supervisors refused to reimburse Warden Purchase the $11 for previously performed game warden services. The same request had been refused for the previous three years. Any number of factors could explain the specific reason that Crawford County failed to reimburse its game warden. The end result was that the county did not see the merit

Game Warden E. Purchase, the Au Sable's first warden, holding the North Branch's first brown trout. Used with permission from the Lovells Township Historical Society.

Left: Lovells's leading citizen, T. E. Douglas, one of the North Branch's earliest lodge owners and conservationists. Used with permission from the Fuller's North Branch Outing Club.

Below: In 1916, Douglas established the North Branch Outing Club as the final days of his logging business came to an end. Used with permission from the Fuller's North Branch Outing Club.

in taking care of its game warden or the ecosystem he was appointed to protect. Purchase was known to rule the river with an iron fist, taking in anyone who fished out of season, kept short fish, or fished by illegal means. He closely adhered to the game laws. Warnings seemed infrequent and court appearances often. While the local government failed to reimburse the local warden, concerned conservation anglers took notice.

Privatized Game Warden Conservation

Disappointed with the lack of enforcement on the Au Sable's North Branch, Mershon wrote to the state requesting the private hiring of Mr. Purchase in 1906:

> I have a letter from T. E. Douglas, Grayling, Michigan this morning in relation to the fishing of the North Branch of the Au Sable. He says, "We are sadly in need of a game warden. It is too bad to have so many small fish taken. I was talking with Rube Babbitt to-day; he runs the Club House on the main stream at Stevens Bridge and he says they are taking everything from 4" up."
>
> There is a man there named Purchase who was Game Warden once and he was the only good one I know of in the State of Michigan. He was not afraid of a soul and would stop everyone and search their baskets and boats; but on account of no salary allowances, he resigned. If he could be reappointed I would guarantee to pay $100.00 towards his yearly salary, for one year at least & run the chance of getting my friends here in Saginaw to chip in this amount.
>
> Violations of the fishing laws have been very open this year. Mr Callan of Saginaw told me, a week ago, before the season opened, he was at Clare and saw a man catching trout, he actually saw the trout taken out of the water. George Morley of this city told me that on either April 28th or 29th he was told by an acquaintance in Saginaw that he had that day received a fine mess of trout from some up country friend of his.
>
> The limit as to length has very little attention paid to it on the North Branch of the Au Sable. A game warden would make an example of these law breakers with the greatest ease if he had any disposition to do so."[21]

Soon Mershon's personal friends were sending their payments to Douglas, a former lumberman and successful fisherman's lodge owner, for the North Branch Protection Fund. Within a month Douglas collected a total of $191, $10 to $15 at a time.

From whom did the streams need guarding? Purchase's benefactors believed the greatest threats came from the local population and the uninformed traveling trout tourists. One of his first jobs was to post signs informing anglers of the Au Sable's special 8-inch limit, 1 inch longer than streams in the rest of the state. He also wasted no time in taking in fish-law violators. Douglas wrote to Mershon to inform him of Purchase's effectiveness: "He has convicted nine and got them all scared. One man would not allow him to

examine his creel and it cost him $14 just the same."[22] Douglas had the greatest stake in Purchase's work. As an outfitter, Douglas was a local who served out-of-town fishermen. Some of these fishermen were an early breed of angling conservationists. Others were merely tourists, hoping to have a weekend of angling fun and arrive home with a full creel.

Douglas could not afford to alienate his clientele. At the same time, he needed to protect the resource that brought anglers to his establishment. The 8-inch-limit law helped to ensure that some natural reproduction took place, which bolstered the stream population.

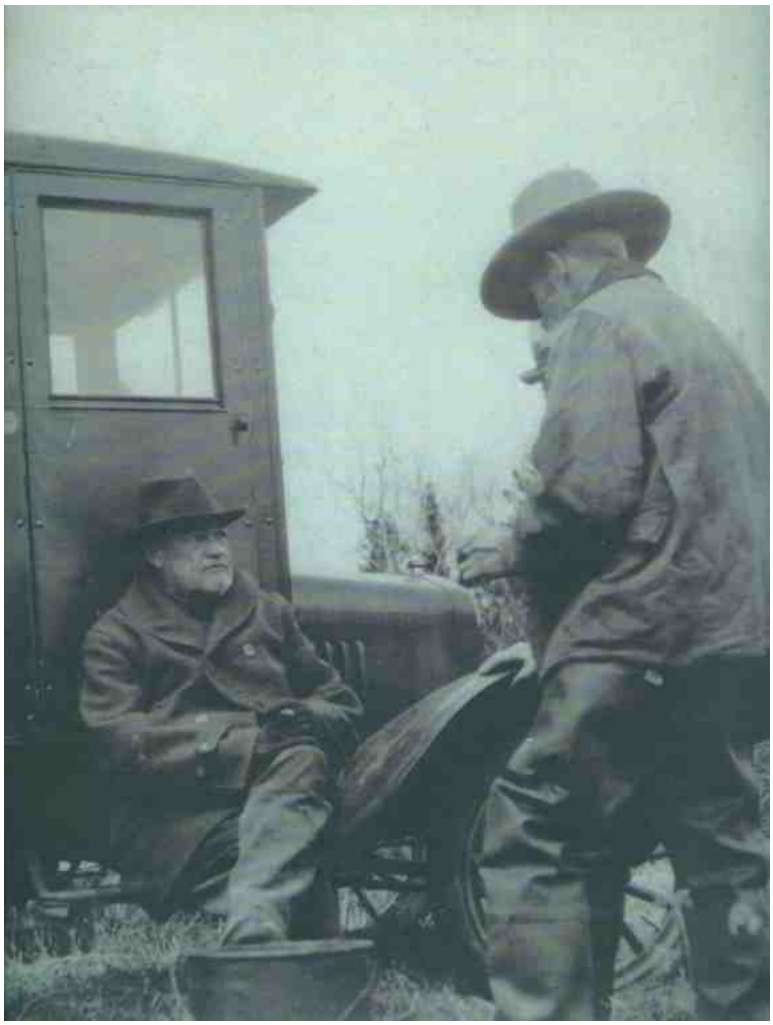
In Warden Purchase, Mershon and Douglas found the perfect solution to game violations along the Au Sable. Mershon was happy to hear that game laws were enforced and prosecuted, even if local economic support was lacking, and Douglas could promise his anglers the opportunity to fish a stream that was held to the highest conservation standards. Personally, Mershon could not have been happier—that is, until one of his close friends found himself on the wrong side of the law.

Mershon's Conservation Contradiction

W. J. Hunsaker was a prominent Saginaw newspaperman and personal friend of Mershon. Hunsaker made several hunting and fishing trips with Mershon, but in July 1906, he fished the North Branch while Mershon was away fishing for salmon in Canada. Warden Purchase stopped Hunsaker, as he tended to do with everyone, and inspected his creel. In measuring out all of the fish—which may have been many because the creel limit for the Au Sable and all of Michigan streams was thirty-five fish a day, with a total limit of 100 fish in possession—Purchase found one that did not measure the full 8 inches required for possession of an Au Sable trout. He arrested Hunsaker and charged him with violating the state fish law.

Mershon was outraged that Purchase would find a personal friend of his—someone he knew to be supportive of game conservation—to be in violation of the law. He wrote to Michigan State Game Warden C. H. Chapman:

> Now I think that it would be a good plan to caution Purchase not to be too technical; where the intent of the law is not violated, he should not split hairs. Almost everyone will sometimes get a trout in his basket that, after it has shrunk a few hours, will be ⅛" scant. Technical inforcement [*sic*] of this kind in a case like this only puts both the law and the inforcement [*sic*] in disrepute.[23]



William B. Mershon and Rube Babbitt prepare to stock the Au Sable with fingerling trout. Used with permission from the Lovells Township Historical Society.

Douglas entered into the argument by siding with Purchase. He wrote to Mershon stating, ". . . Mr. Hunsaker got caught but if he takes his chances of keeping short fish and gets caught he is . . . to stand the consequences than a man that counts in the mill."[24] Mr. Hunsaker admitted guilt when he swore in his trial that the fish was short at 7¾ inches. Douglas felt that even among the rich and influential guests who visited his river, the rules were the same, and all should be subjected to the consequences if they chose to violate them.

Mershon was not of the same opinion. Suddenly the warden whom he had championed for his reputation of stopping everyone on the stream had targeted the very men who paid his salary. Mershon hated it when a warden served the interest of the guides, market hunters, and the local population, as was the case with his disdain for the failed Saginaw warden system, but he expected preferential treatment when it applied to those who were supposedly on the right side of conservation. Eventually Mershon got over the Hunsaker issue and supported Purchase's work. The following summer Purchase fell victim to personal health issues and died in a sanitarium in Detroit. Other state game wardens took his place, but none gained as great a reputation as Reuben S. Babbitt of Grayling. Babbitt guided on the local Au Sable waters, was a caretaker at one of the main branch clubs, and went on to become the most famous of the Au Sable game wardens.[25]

The Game Warden Legacy

The county warden system highlighted the division between the different angler factions. Douglas needed to make sure that his guests were able to enjoy the quality fly-fishing experience that they had paid for. Mershon wanted someone who would follow the state conservation

A later photo (1930) of Game Warden Rube Babbit on his favorite river. Used with permission from the Fuller's North Branch Outing Club.

laws to the letter but extend leniency to his fellow upper-class friends. Purchase did not seem to indicate that he owed his allegiance to anyone other than the state conservation laws, as was demonstrated by his refusal to back down with the Hunsacker situation. Local authorities opposed the outside influence by refusing to reimburse Purchase for his work-related expenses.

Michigan's local-warden system was about control and access to state resources. Over the decades, the state appropriated the power to regulate resource management with local oversight. Legislation followed a top-down path. Game wardens split the difference between state mandates and local adherence. Mershon and Douglas represented the growing influence of special interest groups who had a role in directing the state's conservation agenda.

The duality of cooperation and tension between the different classes of Au Sable anglers was highlighted by Purchase's efforts. As a fellow native, perhaps other local anglers felt Purchase would turn a blind eye to their occasional dynamiting of the stream or out-of-season fishing. Douglas put his faith in Purchase's ability to protect the resource that his lodge depended on: a steady supply of trout for the angling tourists. Mershon saw Purchase as an extension of his own personal conservation agenda against local and transient anglers. In the end, despite the various economic, political, and personal influences, Purchase's actions seemed devoted to a moral ecology based on what was good for the river and its trout. These same principles would later guide a group of anglers to establish Trout Unlimited on the banks of the Au Sable in 1959.

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CONTRIBUTORS

Jenny Borgelt

Bryon Borgelt, PhD, is a lifelong angler and student of history. He has been able to combine both of these passions with his dissertation in history for the University of Toledo, "Flies Only: Early Sport Fishing Conservation on Michigan's Au Sable River." As a teacher and administrator at St. John's Jesuit High School in Toledo, Ohio, Dr. Borgelt created the Titan Fly Fishers. This student group ties flies, volunteers, takes its drift boat to Michigan for salmon and steelhead, travels to Grayling, Michigan, for trout, and visits eastern Pennsylvania for brook trout. He, his wife Jenny, his golden retriever Bear, and his calico cat Snickers live in Maumee, Ohio.

Derek Sater, Reel Action Fly Fishing

J. I. (Jim) Merritt, a longtime member of the American Museum of Fly Fishing, pictured here with a New York State steelhead on Cattaraugus Creek, lives in Pennington, New Jersey. He is the author of *Trout Dreams: A Gallery of Fly-Fishing Profiles* (Derrydale Press, 2000), and a former editor of Princeton University's alumni magazine and of *We Proceeded On*, the quarterly journal of the Lewis and Clark Trail Heritage Foundation. He wrote about Ernie Schwiebert in the Spring 2006 of this journal.

Austin W. Hogan

Austin W. Hogan's schooling, army years, and career as an aerosol physicist have kept him close to rivers throughout his life. As part of the State University at Albany's Atmospheric Sciences Department, he joined the Atmospheric Sciences Research Center and began fieldwork at the Whiteface Mountain Observatory above the West Branch of the Ausable in May 1964. Field research in later years took him to the Siletz and Alsea rivers in Oregon, the Snake River in Wyoming, the upper Rapid Creek in South Dakota, the Yampa River in Colorado, nameless ponds in Newfoundland, and the Yellowstone River below the falls. He was also able to fish the Spruce, East Canada, and West Canada creeks many mornings or evenings when teaching the spring semester at Albany. Hogan now lives in Piermont, New Hampshire, 200 yards from a dandy little stream. He's shown here at the South Pole in 1976.

Up on the Roof

Photos by Sara Wilcox

The salmon weather vane, crafted by Warren Gilker, that sits atop the American Museum of Fly Fishing.

All things considered, the weather vane would seem destined for obsolescence in our digital age. We have weather stations in our homes that not only tell us which way the wind is blowing and how fast, but provide the temperature, barometric pressure, and humidity level, and even sync up with the atomic clock in Boulder, Colorado. We can turn on the TV or go online to get detailed forecasts in a matter of minutes, and wind speed and direction are among the many factors that forecasters have already considered before making their predictions. Unless you live in an area that's at least partially rural, I'd wager you probably don't remember the last time you even *saw* a weather vane.

Weather vanes, which indicate wind direction, have been around in one form or another since ancient times; the oldest known example honored the Greek god Triton and was affixed to the Tower of Winds in Athens, built by Andronicus in 48 B.C. Vikings used weather vanes on the masts of their ships during their exploratory voyages in the ninth century, the same period in which a papal decree required that the figure of a rooster be mounted on top of every Christian church to remind people of St. Peter's three denials, thus (presumably) inspiring both sinners and the faithful alike to attend regular services. The term *weather vane* is partially derived from *fane*, an Anglo-Saxon word meaning flag or banner, particularly the standards commonly seen on castle turrets, which both indicated the owner's rank and family name and gave the castle's archers a quick visual to determine how to adjust their aim in windy conditions.

However, despite its roots in various traditions and countries, the weather vane as we think of it today is primarily an American creation. It was a very popular item among the earliest colonists, who saw its use as symbolic of their desire for a country based on political and social equality: instead of it being a privilege of the wealthy, as was the case in Europe, anyone in the New World had the right to raise a banner above his or her home or barn.[1] As a result, American tin- and coppersmiths became increasingly creative and intricate with their designs. By the late 1700s, they were crafting weather vanes vastly superior to those made by European metalworkers. Animals such as cows, horses, pigs, and, yes, roosters were common figures in agrarian areas, whereas whales, swordfish, ships, dolphins, and even the occasional mermaid graced the roofs of homes in coastal villages. Today, those early weather vanes are widely considered to be among the first examples of American folk art.

Long after our daily lives stopped requiring their use as wind indicators, weather vanes still remain a way to add a personal touch to one's home or place of business or to pay tribute to a particular building's history. The museum's office, for example, sports a horse weather vane, which I suspect has been there since the building's days as a carriage house in the late 1800s. The stable on the grounds of Steven Spielberg's home in the Hamptons has a 4-foot velociraptor showing you which way the wind is blowing, and one of the shopping centers here in Manchester has a skier weather vane, reflecting the many

years the town was primarily known as a ski destination. And if a person lived or fished near Canada's Grand Cascapedia in the last half of the twentieth century, there's an excellent chance his or her greatest catch was immortalized by one of the area's most famous residents: Warren Gilker.

Warren Gilker (1922–1998) learned the blacksmith trade from his father and grandfather, both blacksmiths themselves. However, advances in technology meant a steady decline in the need for a smith's services, forcing Gilker to get a job in a lumber mill shortly after he got married. An avid angler, he took leave from his mill job every summer to work at Camp Chaleur, a well-known lodge on the Grand Cascapedia. In 1957, the lodge's new owner, Charles Engelhard, offered Gilker a full-time job as manager of Camp Chaleur, a position he held for thirty-six years. At Engelhard's request, Gilker also served as the Grand Cascapedia's head warden beginning in 1963, and he quickly became known for his fierce antipoaching crusade. In 1968 his stint as head warden ended, after a car crash during a high-speed pursuit of a gang of poachers nearly cost him his life. After his recovery, he returned to work full-time for the Engelhards at the Lorne Cottage camp. His work in conservation, though, was far from over. In the late 1970s, he helped negotiate a complex accord between the Micmac tribe, the private lodges, and the Québec government, an achievement that helped earn him the Atlantic Salmon Federation's Happy Fraser Award—given to those who have made outstanding long-term contributions to wild Atlantic salmon conservation at a regional or national level—in 1988.

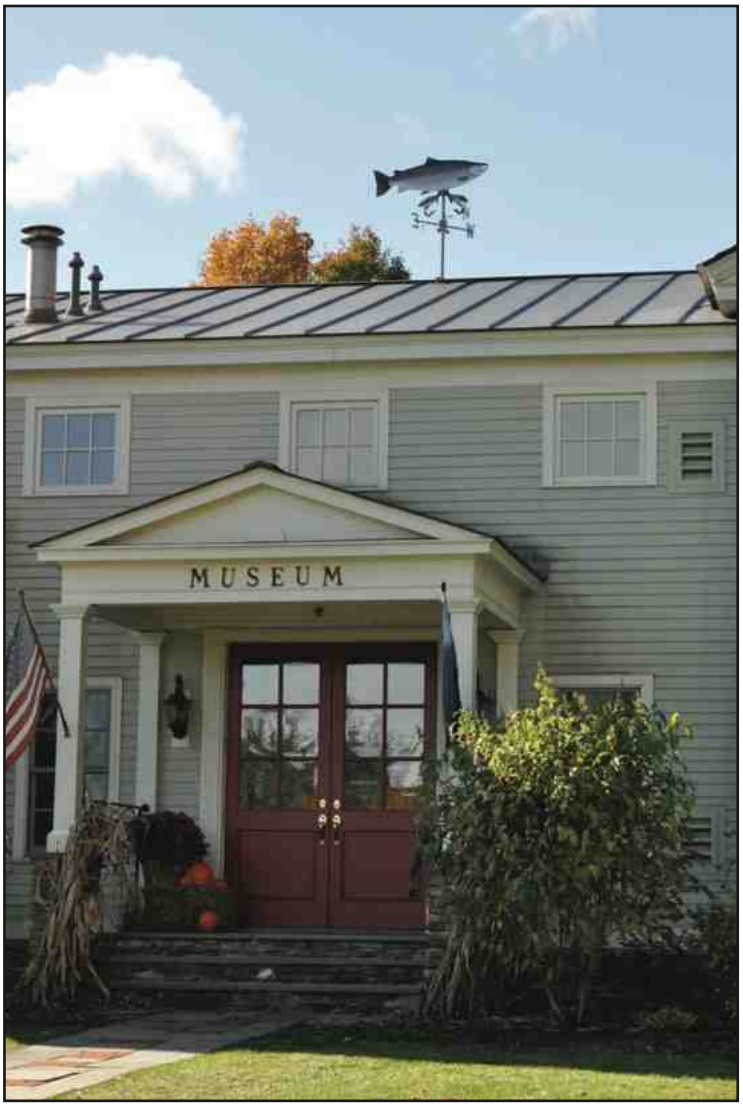
By that point, however, Gilker had reinvented himself yet again. Throughout his years as camp manager and head warden, Gilker continued with his work as a blacksmith both as a hobby and as a side business, mostly crafting items like door hinges and andirons for various friends and family. Then, in 1980, Jane Engelhard, widow of Gilker's friend and former employer Charles Engelhard, asked Gilker to make a weather vane in the shape of a 45-pound salmon once caught by her late husband. She placed it on the roof of Lorne Cottage, and other requests for commemorative weather vanes soon followed. Over the ensuing years, Gilker made hundreds of weather vanes, and although the majority were crafted for anglers, Gilker also fashioned weather vanes in the shapes of, among other things, horses, deer, Canada geese, loons, grouse, an elephant, a bagpiper, a Mountie, and even one of himself working as a blacksmith to go on his workshop.

To make his weather vanes, Gilker first made a sketch of his subject on a piece of cardboard, then traced this shape onto a 4-foot-square piece of aluminum and cut out the form with a power saw. Usually he cut out six metal forms or so at a time and then began the painting process. Because one side of the weather vane needed to be painted and dried before he could move on to the other, it usually took about three days for each one to be finished. If it was one of his salmon weather vanes, he would also craft a base featuring a pair of salmon flies, which would be painted to replicate some of his favorite patterns.[2]

As I write this in the autumn of 2010, it is one of Gilker's weather vanes that sits atop the museum gallery building. It is, as far as my research can determine, the largest of Gilker's reproductions, a replica of a 53-pound salmon caught by Frederick Stanley, the 16th Earl of Derby and the 6th Governor General of Canada, in 1892. In that same year, Lord Stanley donated a trophy to be given annually to the top amateur hockey team in Canada—a trophy that eventually became known simply as the Stanley Cup. Stanley caught the fish on the Grand Cascapedia River in the Big Camp Pool, and Gilker fashioned his recreation from a cutout that hung on the wall at the nearby Middle Camp lodge. The weather vane was donated to the museum by Ron Swanson in 1994 and was transferred from the roof of the Seminary Avenue offices to the current building when the museum moved in 2004.

So, the next time you visit the museum, be sure to take a look skyward. There's a wealth of history there, just blowing in the wind.

—Sara Wilcox



The weather vane in its place of pride atop the gallery building.

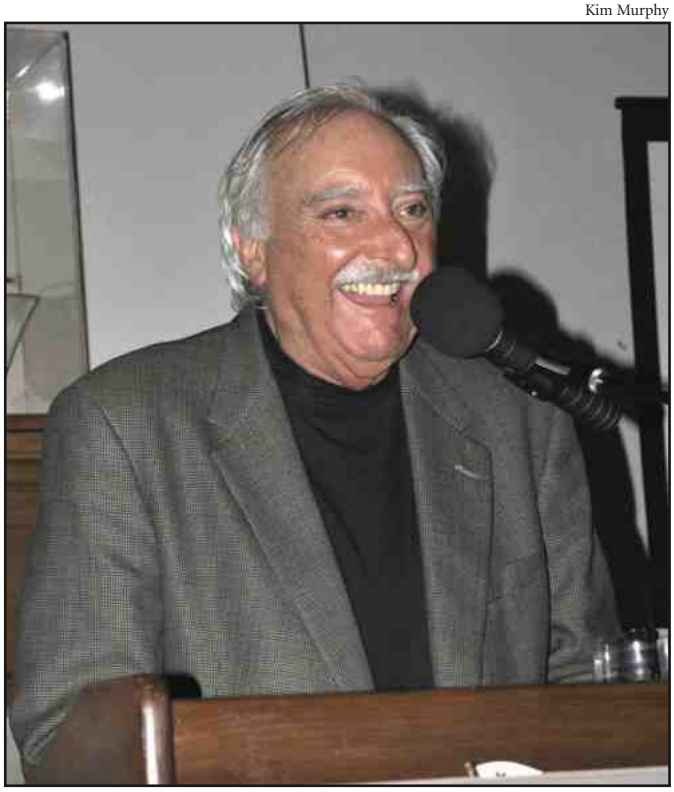
ENDNOTES

1. Maureen Timm, "Weathervanes: American Folk Art," *The Antique Shoppe Newspaper* (February 2006). http://antiqueshoppefl.com/archives/mtimm/weathervanes.htm; accessed 28 September 2010.

2. Charlotte Phillips, "Salmon on the Wind," *Atlantic Salmon Journal* (Autumn 1988), 21.

Museum News

Kim Murphy



Russell Chatham speaking at the museum's September 30 dinner in San Francisco.

Gathering with Russell Chatham

The nearly one hundred guests present at our September 30 dinner at the Saint Francis Yacht Club were not only treated to some of San Francisco's best views, but also enthralled and entertained by fishing stories told by artist and author Russell Chatham. "No one ever shot himself in the middle of an evening hatch," said Chatham, who stood at the podium with a wide smile that seemed to infect the listeners. After a few anecdotes, questions were taken from the audience, who engaged him on everything from his "antique" tackle to his painting style and techniques.

A modern renaissance man, Chatham was introduced by Jeffrey M. Pill of Miracle Productions, who described him best by saying: "He is not only creative, but also multitalented. Russell is world famous as a fine artist and he is world famous as a writer. Ironically, there are some admirers of his paintings and lithographs who don't even know he is a writer, just as there are people who love his books and articles but who don't know he is a fine artist."

The museum would like to thank Russell Chatham, who flew from his current home in Livingston, Montana, to his birthplace of San Francisco, where he still has many friends. His generous donations of signed copies of some of his books, a number of personally tied flies, and four different lithographs were the highlights of the evening's auction.

We'd also like to thank Trustees Roger Riccardi, Philip Sawyer, and Erik Oken, who worked to make the dinner and auction a success; William Meyer for hosting the event at the Saint Francis Yacht Club; George Noceti of Your Charity Auctioneer for his auctioneering services; and all of our many donors, without whom we would not have had an auction: Kathryn Asahino Tait, Val Atkinson, Doug Biederbeck, Nancy Bundschu, Gundlach Bundschu, Jay Burgin and Mary Jacques of Five Rivers Lodge, Mary Kay Callaghan, Russell Chatham, Todd France of Blast & Cast Outfitters, Austin Francis, E. & J. Gallo Family Vineyards, Joseph Gennaro Jr., Hi-Tec, Judi Kannon, Paula Kornell, Fanny Krieger, Louis M. Martini Winery, Janice Mondavi, Joan and Jerry Murphy, Oakley, Inc., the Orvis Company, Lisa Pavageau, Thomas Pero of Wild River Press, Claudia Sansone, Vicki Sebastiani, Robert Selb of the Classic Fly Fisherman, Ann and Thayer Talcott, and Temple Fork Outfitters.

Kim Murphy

This saltwater reel was just one of the many great finds from our Appraisal Day on October 16. Jim Schottenham (above) of Lang's Auction, who is also president of the Old Reel Collectors Association, explained that this late 1930s reel was made by Fin-Mor. It's a 15/0 two-handed big-game reel with the original line and backing. It was valued between $3,500 and $4,500. Thanks to Jim and to Fred Polhemus of the J. Russell Jinishian Gallery of Fairfield, Connecticut, for helping us discover angling collectibles and sporting art.

Yoshi Akiyama

Peter Corbin and this year's painting winner Russell Lucas.

Friends of Corbin Shoot

Thanks to our event hosts, Hudson Farm and Griffin & Howe of Andover, New Jersey, the ninth Friends of Corbin Shoot was a great success. Twenty-one shooters participated in the sporting clays, flurries, and two pheasant shoots, including thirteen returning and eight new participants. The event culminated with the presentation of the oil painting *Prairie Canadas* by nationally acclaimed sporting artist Peter Corbin. This year's lucky winner was Russell Lucas.

The museum wishes to thank Peter Kellogg and Trustees Peter Corbin and George Gibson for all their efforts. Funds generated at this important event go toward our public programming, such as exhibitions, gallery programs, family events, and the publication of our journal.

Upcoming Events

January 15
Fit to Be "Tyed"
Fly tying for all ages in the museum gallery
American Museum of Fly Fishing
Manchester, Vermont

February 12
Vermont Memories
Hear stories of Vermont's fishing past
American Museum of Fly Fishing
Manchester, Vermont

March 10
Annual Dinner and Auction
Anglers' Club of New York
New York City

April 2
Spring Training
Hone your fishing skills just in time for opening of the season
American Museum of Fly Fishing
Manchester, Vermont

Always check our website (www.amff.com) for additions, updates, and more information or contact Kim Murphy at (802) 362-3300 or kmurphy@amff.com. "Casting About," the museum's new e-mail newsletter, offers up-to-date news and event information. To subscribe, look for the link on our website or contact the museum.

Recent Donations

Jim Heckman of Manchester, Vermont, donated three books: E. Marston's *Fishing for Pleasure and Catching It* (Charles Whittingham and Co., 1906, 1st ed.), A. D. Livingston's *Fly-Rodding for Bass* (Lippincott, 1976, 1st ed.), and Douglas Sutherland's *The English Gentleman's Good Fishing Guide* (Michael Joseph Ltd., 1990). **Charles B. Barnes Jr.** of Medfield, Massachusetts, gave us a copy of Phoebe Barnes Driver's *A Salmon Fishing Journey* (William L. Bauhan, 2002).

Several people donated collections of books. **Jim Gerweck** of Pittsford, Vermont, donated sixty-six; **Shelly Weining** of New York City gave us thirty-three; **Michael K. McCaffery** of Culpeper, Virginia, sent nine; and **Jeannine Dickey** of Rangeley, Maine, donated four. For a detailed list of these donations, please contact the museum.

Albord Clements of Chatham, New York, sent us a fly tied by Helen Shaw in 1981, the Parachute Albord. **Scott Cesari** of Bangor, Pennsylvania, gave us flies he tied in 2010: a Realistic Butterfly Pattern and a Realistic Stonefly. And **Richard F. Kress** of Rahway, New Jersey, donated a fourteen-item collection that includes flies tied by Lee Wulff, Warren Duncan, Joe Bates, Harold Gibbs, and Al Brewster (for a detailed list of this donation, please contact the museum).

Artist **Matt Patterson** of New Ipswich, New Hampshire, gave us *Kokanoe Salmon,* an original watercolor featured in his book, *Freshwater Fish of the Northeast* (UPNE, 2010). **Charles R. Eichel** of Manchester, Vermont, gave us a c. 1820 journal of the J. M. Ogden Pleissner family and a photo album of the Ogden Pleissner family vacation in Wyoming.

John E. Reynolds of New Britain, Connecticut, sent us DVDs containing short films of fishing by Irving C. Jerolman titled "Sainte Marguerite Salmon Club in 1930," "Trout Fishing in Massachusetts in 1930," "Walton Club in Connecticut 1930," and "Pototuck Club in Newton Connecticut 1950." And **Donn Johnson** of North Haven, Connecticut, donated two videotapes: Lee Richardson's *A World of Fishing* and Mike Gurnett's *Three Men, Three Rivers.*

Kim Murphy

Thanks, George, for helping to make our art auction such a great success! Above, George Van Hook puts the final touches on one of the thirteen paintings offered at our Art and Angling benefit auction held in the museum library on July 31. This year's auction focused not on one particular river or region, but on one artist. George Van Hook is a plein-air painter from Cambridge, New York, who is known for his iconic scenes of pastoral life in and around the Battenkill region. The museum would also like to thank Clarke Comollo of Comollo Antiques and Fine Wines of Manchester, Vermont, for donating his auctioneering services.

It Takes a Community

Photos by Sara Wilcox

Clockwise from top left: When we began the casting-pond project, the bridge was desperately in need of repair.

Yoshi Akiyama directs repairs to the bridge.

The bridge repair work is completed, and the bridge is dedicated as the Sherman Brothers Bridge.

The platform mirrors the design of the bridge.

The summer of 2010 was dry for many weeks and offered ideal conditions for the pathway installation.

Jim Becker carefully measures and plots the bridge-ramp incline.

The community that surrounds the American Museum of Fly Fishing is vast. Our patrons come from near and far, and although most have a strong passion for fly fishing, some enjoy the educational opportunities of our public programs and our esteemed journal. We are fortunate that our supporters step forward when they see a good cause. Recently, several steps led to the support of a particularly good cause and its inaugural event on museum grounds.

Step 1: Someone had an idea. One of our volunteers, Edgar Auchincloss, visited the museum on a gray winter Saturday afternoon with a newspaper clipping. Nearby Stratton Mountain was hosting a group of veterans from the national organization Wounded Warriors. Edgar thought it would be good for the museum to host a group like this.

Step 2: An introduction was made. One of our trustees, William McMaster, called the office to make sure we knew about the national veterans' organization called Project Healing Waters Fly Fishing. This organization encourages the use of fly fishing to assist with rehabilitation of American veterans. Dr. McMaster works with California veterans and put us in touch with the western coordinator for Project Healing Waters (PHW). We were then directed to the New England coordinator and continued to stay in touch with him for many months.

Step 3: We had to begin somewhere. Thanks to the generosity of Trustees Gardner Grant and Gary Sherman, contributions were made to repair the long-neglected bridge on our pond. With a repaired bridge as the background, we could suddenly see the potential of our casting pond: Wouldn't this make a fine venue for PHW?

Step 4: We discovered Fund-a-Need. We appreciate the education we received from Cleveland-based auctioneer Bob Hale when he explained the concept of a Fund-a-Need auction program. At that Cleveland event, we raised more than $3,000 to construct a wheelchair-accessible casting platform at the pond. Over the next sixteen months, we continued with this funding model at our Anglers' All event, the Heritage Award event, the San Francisco Dinner, and again in Cleveland.

Step 5: We created a design and found a craftsman. Of course, we did not have to look far to find someone to design the bridge and casting platform. Our own deputy director, Yoshi Akiyama, has been designing our exhibitions for more than ten years and contributed to the overall design of our beautiful museum building. We knew he could bring that same sophisticated yet functional design to our backyard. Jim Becker, along with assistance from Tom Becker and Brad Knipef, ran with the design and began the construction.

Step 6: We decided that sometimes it's okay to be a pest. After many months of sending project updates to Marcus Cohn of PHW, Marcus was able to share some wonderful news. Project Healing Waters had just formalized an agreement to participate in the state of Vermont. Marcus gave us the new contact name. Tim Stauder received a phone call that very hour (and chuckled when he heard who was calling . . . hmm, Tim may have been alerted to all our e-mails!). Tim works for

the White River Junction Veterans Administration Hospital and is a member of the Greater Upper Valley Chapter of Trout Unlimited. Indeed, Tim and his TU chapter were volunteering to work with a group of veterans through PHW. To see what the PHW program was all about, the museum was invited to attend the first Vermont-held PHW program at the home of Tom and Diana Hayes. Tom and Diana volunteered their time, home, and pond for an afternoon of instruction and fishing, followed by a scrumptious meal.

Step 7: We looked to the regional high school. We had the bridge, we had the casting platform, and we had the pathway; we just didn't have a place for people to sit. We contacted our regional high school, Burr and Burton Academy, and explained the pond project to Cliff Hay, the much-loved wood-shop teacher. Mr. Hay found the perfect garden-bench pattern, lowered the height to meet the Americans with Disabilities Act requirements, and called upon three juniors to construct the two benches. Thanks to the talents of Trevor Parker, Cruz Cornell, and Nelson Pike, our pond seating is also truly accessible to all.

Step 8: We decided that if we build it, they will come. After meeting with Tim Stauder and the other TU volunteers, it was agreed that the museum would serve as the second PHW venue in Vermont. We made last-minute preparations and swept the bridge, ramps, platform, and benches to warmly welcome eight veterans for the afternoon. Thanks to PHW and TU volunteers Susan Balch, Seth Dunn, Ed Finley, Bill Goldsworthy, Al Karg, Jenny McLaughlin, and Tim Stauder, these veterans learned the art of casting. We then toured the exhibition gallery and library. Everyone enjoyed the day.

The great success of this project was due to the kindness of the following contributors:

Michael Bakwin
Foster Bam and
Sallie Baldwin
Richard Bamberger
Marilyn Best
Jim Biggar
David and Kathy Brown
Brent and Barbara Buckley
Daniel Carter
Bruce Eckstein
Mike Farrell
Robert Fitch
George and Beth Gibson
Gardner and Ellen Grant
Jonathan Grimm
Stephen Gunther
Bill and Phyllis Herrick
William Jordan
Amy Kellogg
Kirk and Megan Kellogg
Woods and Wendy King
George Klein
George McCabe
William and Lynn McMaster
Bradford Mills
John Mueller
Latham Murfey III
David and Meg Nichols
Den Nichols
Leigh and Anne Perkins
A. William Reynolds
Roger Riccardi
Jim and Donna Sanfilippo
Bob Searles
Hewitt and Paula Shaw
Gary and Lyn Sherman
Todd Shigekane
Ronald and Joan Stuckey
Richard and Wendy Tisch
Jerome and Elizabeth Tone
Alan Vidinsky
Thomas Whitlock

We welcome you all to our wonderfully caring community!

Cathi Comar
Executive Director

Left, top to bottom: Students from Burr and Burton Academy (Manchester, Vermont) work on the garden benches as teacher Cliff Hay supervises.

Restocking the pond with brown trout was a must!

Project Healing Waters participants and volunteers from Trout Unlimited Greater Upper Valley Chapter are the first to enjoy our new, fully accessible casting pond.

We are proud to present our accomplishments thanks to your tremendous support.

The American Museum of Fly Fishing

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The American Museum of Fly Fishing, a nationally accredited, 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, exhibitions, and public programs provide documentation of the evolution of fly fishing as a sport, art form, craft, and industry in the United States and abroad from its origins to the present. Rods, reels, flies, tackle, art, books, manuscripts, and photographs form the basis of the museum's collections.

The museum provides public programs to fulfill its educational mission, including exhibitions, publications, gallery programs, and special events. Research services are available for members, visiting scholars, students, educational organizations, and writers. Contact Yoshi Akiyama at yakiyama @amff.com to schedule a visit.

Volunteer!

Throughout the year, the museum needs volunteers to help with programs, special projects, events, and administrative tasks. You do not have to be an angler to enjoy working with us! Contact Sarah Moore at smoore@amff.com to tell us how we would benefit from your skills and talents.

Join!

Membership Dues (per annum)

Friend	$10,000
	$5,000
	$1,000
Sponsor	$500
Business	$250
Benefactor	$100
Associate	$50

The museum is an active, member-oriented nonprofit institution. Membership dues include four issues of the *American Fly Fisher;* unlimited visits for your entire family to museum exhibitions, gallery programs, and special events; access to our 7,000-volume angling reference library; and a discount on all items sold by the museum on its website and inside the museum store, the Brookside Angler. To join, please contact Sarah Moore at smoore@amff.com.

Support!

The American Museum of Fly Fishing relies on the generosity of public-spirited individuals for substantial support. Please contact us if you wish to contribute funding to a specific program, donate an item for fund-raising purposes, or place an advertisement in this journal. We encourage you to give the museum consideration when planning for gifts, bequests, and memorials.