

The American Fly Fisher

Journal of the American Museum of Fly Fishing



WINTER 2019

VOLUME 45 NUMBER 1

Extraordinary Flies



Kelsey McBride

Fly tier Ryan Whitney brought flies to Hooked on the Holidays that kids could drop into their hand-decorated ornaments. He and Bill Sylvester were on hand to tie flies, and Yoshi Akiyama helped the youngest participants tie clown flies. Other holiday activities included a trout-cookie decorating station.

IN 1991, DOROTHY DOWNS of Branford, Connecticut, donated a collection of flies to the museum. When museum staff were gathering artifacts for an exhibit in 2000, they rediscovered the flies, which turned out to be, as far as anyone knows, the oldest in existence. The Harris collection—so named for author John Richard Harris, an Irish entomologist who owned the collection at a key point in its long history—came with excellent provenance, the majority of flies including either a bill of sale or a letter identifying the year tied.

Former museum Registrar Ken Cameron was the first to study the flies. Then, about a decade ago, he, Andrew Herd, and Paul Schullery began corresponding about the collection. The three embarked on further study, with the goal of publishing something. Eventually Cameron dropped out of the project; now, after several more years of work, Herd and Schullery are ready to share their findings.

There is so much to say about the astounding Harris collection that we are presenting “The Oldest Flies” in two parts. You can find the first installment, in which the extraordinary Harris fly collection’s origins are finally discovered, on page 4.

It’s the first issue of the year again, and that means it’s time to feature a painting from our collection. Trustee Fred Polhemus, who was instrumental in helping us acquire Harley Bartlett’s *Brookie Pursuit*, offers us a profile of the artist in “Harley Bartlett: Pursuit of Fish, Game, and Light” (page 2).

Collector Jerry Girard has come into possession of a salesman’s hook wallet by Milward & Sons. It’s a stunning collectible, which he shares here, both so that we have a chance to see it and on the chance that a reader might be able to provide him with more information. Turn to page 20 and have a look.

Those of us who knew the innovator/author/artist John Betts, on learning

of his passing, immediately began comforting one another with stories. Former Hexagraph owner Harry Briscoe and I exchanged several e-mails. In one, he mentioned the hand-created Christmas greetings that John used to send. “Each was an original in its own right, signed and sometimes numbered . . . the opposing side contained a handwritten note—always in pencil. Not unlike the *Remarques* book.”

Ah, *Remarques*—a perfect little book of drawings. When John was working with publisher Michael Hackney on *Reels & Making Them*, Michael wanted the limited-edition portion of the run signed, but the physical distance between author and publisher made it impractical. He asked John to instead create 4-inch-by-4-inch bookplates with a *remarque*, date, signature, and serial number that could be pasted into the books. The 100 *remarques* were so impressive that Michael, to surprise John, published them in an edition of 100. As soon as I learned of its existence, I had to score a copy. It’s one of my favorite things.

To edit John Betts is to love John Betts, at least as far as I can tell. I asked two of his other editors, Michael Hackney and Art Scheck, who knew John best during different decades, to share their memories with us. Our memorial to this great museum friend begins on page 15.

We’ve been busy, as usual. In August, we proudly opened our Selch-Bakwin fly room (page 14). In November, fly-fishing guide Rachel Finn was presented with the museum’s 2018 Izaak Walton Award in Boston (page 18). December brought our annual Hooked on the Holidays gathering (see photo above). For more about what we’ve been up to lately and what we plan to be up to soon, be sure to check out Museum News (page 25).

KATHLEEN ACHOR
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Statement of Ownership, Management, and Circulation

The American Fly Fisher (publication number 0084-3562) is published four times per year (Winter, Spring, Summer, Fall). Editor is Kathleen Achor. Complete address for both publisher and editor is The American Museum of Fly Fishing, P.O. Box 42, Manchester, VT 05254. The journal is wholly owned by the American Museum of Fly Fishing. Total number of copies: 1,338 (average number of copies of each issue run during the preceding twelve months; 1,250 actual number of copies of single issue published nearest to filing date). Paid/requested circulations (including advertiser's proof and exchange copies): 822 (average; 797 actual). Paid distribution by other classes of mail: 51 (average; 46 actual). Paid distribution through dealers and carriers, street vendors, and counter sales: 60 (average; 55 actual). Free distribution by mail: 0 (average; 0 actual). Free distribution outside the mail: 212 (average; 200 actual). Total free distribution: 212 (average; 200 actual). Total distribution: 1,145 (average; 1,098 actual). Copies not distributed: 193 (average; 152 actual). Total: 1,338 (average; 1,250 actual). Percent paid and/or requested circulation: 81.5% (average; 81.2% actual).

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Harley Bartlett: Pursuit of Fish, Game, and Light 2
Fred Polhemus

The Oldest Flies
Part I: In Which the Extraordinary Harris Fly
Collection's Origins Are Finally Discovered 4
Andrew Herd and Paul Schullery

Gallery: The Selch-Bakwin Fly Room 14

In Memoriam: John F. Betts III 15
Michael Hackney and Art Scheck

AMFF Honors Rachel Finn
with the 2018 Izaak Walton Award 18

Angling for Answers:
Milward & Sons Salesman's
Hook Wallet: Maine Agency 20
Jerry Girard

Museum News 25

Contributors 27

ON THE COVER: Brookie Pursuit, oil on linen (20 x 24 inches) by Harley
Bartlett. From the collection of the American Museum of Fly Fishing.

The American Fly Fisher (ISSN 0884-3562) is published four times a year by the museum at P.O. Box 42, Manchester, Vermont 05254. Publication dates are winter, spring, summer, and fall. Membership dues include the cost of the journal (\$50) and are tax deductible as provided for by law. Membership rates are listed in the back of each issue. All letters, manuscripts, photographs, and materials intended for publication in the journal should be sent to the museum. The museum and journal are not responsible for unsolicited manuscripts, drawings, photographic material, or memorabilia. The museum cannot accept responsibility for statements and interpretations that are wholly the author's. Unsolicited manuscripts cannot be returned unless postage is provided. Contributions to *The American Fly Fisher* are to be considered gratuitous and the property of the museum unless otherwise requested by the contributor. Copyright © 2019, The American Museum of Fly Fishing, Manchester, Vermont 05254. Original material appearing may not be reprinted without prior permission. Periodical postage paid at Manchester, Vermont 05254; Manchester, Vermont 05255; and additional offices (USPS 057410). *The American Fly Fisher* (ISSN 0884-3562) EMAIL: amff@amff.org WEBSITE: www.amff.org

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to:
The American Fly Fisher
P.O. Box 42
Manchester, Vermont 05254

Harley Bartlett: Pursuit of Fish, Game, and Light



Brookie Pursuit, oil on linen (20 x 24 inches).
From the collection of the American Museum of Fly Fishing.

ON A CRISP AUGUST MORNING, Harley Bartlett finds himself waist deep in a Montana creek in the heart of Paradise Valley. Bartlett has been invited to join one of his collectors for a weeklong fishing trip near the collector's ranch. Bartlett's primary focus is not the pursuit of fish but rather mood-evoking imagery for a series of western paintings commissioned by this avid collector. While the collector seeks rising fish and looks for shadows in the gin-clear water, Bartlett just as eagerly seeks an interesting composition of the angler in action, with an awe-inspiring, mountainous landscape framing him as he casts to big, beautiful western brown trout. Each man pursues perfection in his own way, with the end result for the angler a moment he won't soon forget and the end result for the artist a timeless image captured in oil for the collector to enjoy the rest of his life.

Sporting pastimes are in Harley Bartlett's blood every bit as much as they are in his oil paintings. A classically trained artist with a strong illustration background, Bartlett is both a consummate outdoorsman and one of today's best sporting artists. As a hunter of fish and game, he has spent a lifetime in the woods and on the water. He draws inspiration for his sporting images from his firsthand experiences; he paints what he knows. Bartlett approaches a canvas much in the same way he pursues any hunt: a well-laid-out strategy, proper planning, and careful execution on every aspect of approach. His level of

conviction translates directly to the canvas in a way that is rare in today's market. The result is a sporting image that is visually compelling, convincing, and pleasing to the viewer.

Born in 1959 near Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, Bartlett has lived most of his life in Rhode Island and splits his time between there and his camp in the Adirondacks. He was educated at the University of Pennsylvania and followed up with studies at the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts. His experiences in the art world are broad and varied.

Bartlett owned a mural and decorative painting company that supplied cruise ships, hotels, restaurants, and resorts with grand-scale paintings and murals. His mural work is found in the statehouses of Iowa, Utah, and Rhode Island and in the House of Representatives wing of the U.S. Capitol. He has painted religious murals for Rhode Island Catholic churches and portraits of dignitaries throughout the United States.

His paintings are found in prestigious corporate and private collections throughout the Northeast, including the American Museum of Fly Fishing, Amica Insurance Company, the Harvard Club, Rhode Island College, Bryant University, Women & Infants Hospital, Newport Hospital, Lady of Fatima Hospital, Aquidnick Land Trust, Kent County Hospital, Norman Bird Sanctuary, Rhode Island Philharmonic Music School, and the New England Institute of Technology. His portrait work has included many prestigious dignitaries in the political arena; for

example, he was commissioned to paint the official portraits of past Rhode Island Governor Donald Carcieri in 2010 and past Providence Mayor Angel Taveras in 2017. He continues to be commissioned to create paintings for corporate institutions and private collectors alike. His commercial work has been a foundation of training and further developing skills necessary in the fine art world.

Bartlett has been featured in magazines such as *American Artist*, *Florida Architecture*, *Traditional Home*, *Home Gallery*, and *Soundings*. He has won numerous awards throughout his career. In 2018 alone, he received the Alden Bryan Memorial Award from the Guild of Boston Artists, a third-place award at the Bryan Memorial Gallery's *Land & Light & Water & Air* show (Jeffersonville, Vermont), and the Best in Show Maxwell Mays Award at the Providence Art Club's annual member show. He has served in many important governing positions in the art world, including president of the Providence Art Club. He is a member of the National Society of Mural Painters and New England Plein Air Painters, and a past member of the Copley Society. In 2015 he became an elected member of the Guild of Boston Artists and is a current member of the Salmagundi Club in New York City.

Bartlett's sporting paintings are known for their finely crafted compositions and subtle coloring, and for capturing some of the most beautiful locations in the United States. His brushwork and paint application are evocative of American and European paintings of the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries. Like many of the artists of the past who continue to

influence him (Winslow Homer, Thomas Eakins, and Eastman Johnson), he is most drawn to sporting, marine, and landscape art. His sporting subjects (such as seen in the American Museum of Fly Fishing's *Brookie Pursuit*) are nostalgic and timeless, focusing on firsthand experiences as foundations of his creative vision. They are broad and varied, from fishing Bahamian flats for bonefish and permit (in *Heart Stopper* and *Distant Thunder*, below, for example); to the vast waters of the mountainous West for cutthroats, browns, and rainbows; to eastern rivers for native brook trout. Hunting subjects range from northeastern upland game scenes to western big-game themes and everything in between.

Bartlett approaches a canvas first by blocking in the painting: establishing the large shapes that are visually interesting and defining perspective, color combinations, and overall composition. (He may block in several paintings at once if he has multiple ideas.) These are the painting's architectural underpinnings. From this point, he begins to refine the work, adding additional colors and shapes, tightening details, and adding the angler or hunter—as a relatively minor element in the overall production—to the surrounding landscape. His skilled and experienced eye, combined with a masterfully trained hand, yield breathtaking paintings of these beautiful locations and the sportsperson in pursuit.

FRED POLHEMUS
TRUSTEE



Ruth Clegg

Harley Bartlett painting at the Blithewold Mansion in Bristol, Rhode Island.



Above right: *Heart Stopper*, oil (30 x 40 inches).
Image provided by Fred Polhemus.



Right: *Distant Thunder*, oil (36 x 48 inches).
Image provided by Fred Polhemus.

The Oldest Flies

Part I: In Which the Extraordinary Harris Fly Collection's Origins Are Finally Discovered

by Andrew Herd and Paul Schullery



Cook Neilson

A few of the flies in the Harris collection. Clockwise from top: two of a dozen flies by Thomas Cummess, tied in 1789—the oldest authenticated trout flies in the world; a salmon fly from 1791; two sea-trout flies by Hynes of Gort tied in 1797; two flies bought from Stockbridge on the Test in 1816; and a fly tied by Peter O'Holleran of Ireland in 1791, snelled with a piece of sea grass.

THIS TWO-PART article was inspired by a set of flies donated to the museum by Dorothy Downs in 1991, which includes the oldest known surviving artificial fly. They are part of what is known as the Harris collection, which at a key point in their long history belonged to John Richard Harris, an Irish entomologist, fishing consultant, tackle dealer, author, and fellow of the Royal Entomological Society. Harris will best be known to readers for *An Angler's Entomology*, which was published by Collins in 1952. A few of the flies discussed here are mentioned in a footnote on page 140 of that book and illustrated in a plate on the facing page.

The flies in Harris's trove are known to have been originally collected by two Galway men: Richard Gregory, who was said to have been alive around 1800 and with whom most of the early flies are associated; and J. C. Gardiner, who lived a century later. One of the most extraordinary—and from the modern standpoint, the most fortunate—features of the collection is that many of the earliest flies are accompanied by contemporary documentation giving such vital information as their dates of use.

By the casual expedient of recording the dates of the flies' use, those long-ago anglers inadvertently gave us a gift of

almost inexpressible importance to angling historians; these flies therefore rank among the most important in any such collection in the world. But apart from a couple of brief articles that appeared in the *American Fly Fisher* more than eighteen years ago, next to nothing has been researched or written about these treasures and their original owners.^{1,2} You might take the view that all we are discussing here is a collection of time-browned Irish flies, and ask what could possibly be noteworthy about them, but to stop reading now would be to miss out on a tale that would be hard to believe if it appeared in a novel.

1620: THE LAWSON ODDITY

Although manuscript and printed accounts of specific fly patterns survive from as far back as the fifteenth century, and instructions about how to tie flies exist from as early as the seventeenth century, we have only the most general concept of what early patterns looked like in terms of such critical elements as how and where the named materials were attached and what the overall proportions of the finished flies were. In some cases—for example, the earliest Austrian flies—we have no idea of their overall appearance at all, rendering the lists of materials that we know were used to tie each of them baffling and almost useless in any attempt to recreate these ancestral patterns.

You would think that engravings in the early angling books would be helpful in this regard, but fate has decreed that there is a dearth of illustrations in angling books before the second quarter of the nineteenth century. Further, our search for such images reaches the 1840s before we have a significant base of good-quality fly portraits with which to work. Thus, if we are to understand the importance of the Harris collection, we must examine this matter of the first fly illustrations in some depth.

The number of illustrations of any kind of fly pattern published before 1800 is vanishingly small. The first such picture of which we are aware is a woodcut of an artificial fly that appeared in William Lawson's 1620 edition of John Dennys's *The Secrets of Angling* (below) which had been originally published without the woodcut in 1613. Along with the woodcut, Lawson included information on which insect was being imitated and the materials used to tie the fly,

although in both cases the modern reader finds the information woefully inadequate. In the terminologically muddled manner of practically all angling writers before 1800, Lawson said that "your flie must counterfeit the May flie, which is bred of the cod-bait, and is called the water-fly."³ "May flie," "cod-bait," and "water-fly" were all terms used with considerable looseness and in many cases were meant to be exclusive of one another in what kind of insect they referred to.

As for how to tie the fly, Lawson's text and accompanying illustration are just as perplexing. Explaining that the color would vary monthly, he more or less gave up on trying to describe the finished product, saying that "the forme cannot so well be put on paper, as it may be taught by sight [*sic?* was this a misspelling of "sight?"]; yet it will be like this form."⁴ Here followed the woodcut that concerns us, showing a long straight line, probably intended to be horsehair, with an insect imitation of uncertain type attached at its head on the right end of the line.

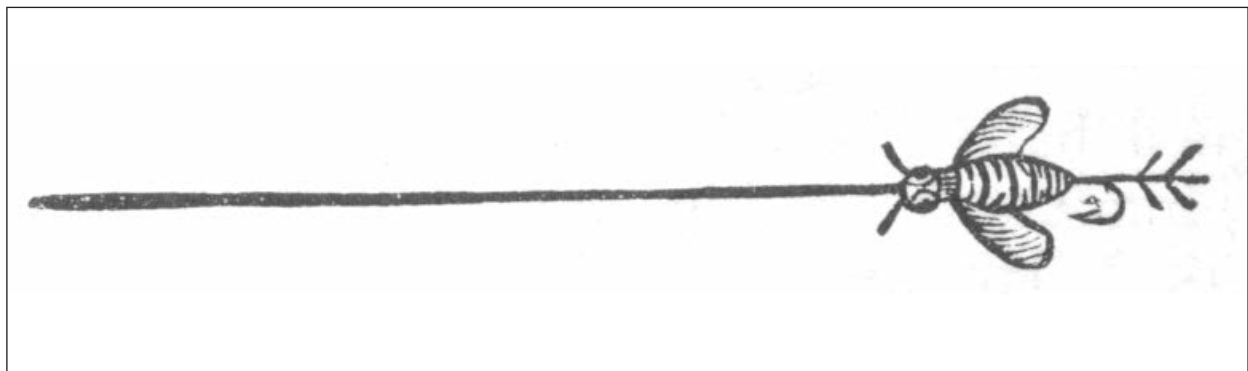
Angling historian John Waller Hills said that the Lawson fly "resembles a house fly on a hook more than anything," but it seems to us at least equally similar to a bee.⁵ The view given in the woodcut may be part of the problem for us; we apparently see the fly from directly overhead with wings extending laterally on both sides. Perhaps if viewed from the side—that being the perspective that a few centuries-worth of later books have conditioned us to expect—the fly's wings would be seen to extend upward as well as outward from the body. In any case, Lawson's description of the fly doesn't much help.

The head is of black silk or haire, the wings of a feather of a mallart, teele, or

pickled hen-wing. The body is Crewell according to the moneth for colour, and run about with a black haire; all fastned at the taile, with the thread that fastned the hooke you must fish in; . . .⁶

All in all, the Lawson fly illustration is a delight and a frustration. It's a delight in giving us so many things to puzzle over and questions to ask, and a frustration for the reasons already mentioned and more. On the one hand, the body is "Crewell," that is to say yarn, almost certainly wool, and different colors were to be used as the season progressed. Also, the clearly segmented appearance of the body was achieved by a single black hair "run about"—the hair was wrapped as we might wrap modern wire, tinsel, or floss, to create the segmented appearance of an insect's body. Another possibly revealing detail is that the fly has a hook whose shank appears proportionately much more like a modern 2x-long hook than like the only other really early hook portraits we have, such as in the 1496 *Treatyse of Fysshynge wyth an Angle*, in which hooks of various sizes are portrayed with what would be regarded by modern standards as roughly 2x-short.

On the other hand—and this is the hand with the most in it—the engraving shows a body on which the alternating dark rings apparently meant to represent the wraps of hair don't completely encircle the body the way wound hair would. The fly's head, rather than being black, is shown with extensive light areas and clearly drawn eyes. Nor did Lawson mention the apparent antennae emerging from the sides of the head. The wings look rather more like actual insect wings than like any of the named winging materials. The body is bulbous, quite unmayfly-like. The tail, whose material



Lawson's fly from his 1620 edition of John Dennys's *The Secrets of Angling*.

Lawson doesn't describe, looks much like a feather whose barbles have been almost entirely stripped off except for two opposing pairs.

It is tempting to just abandon any hope of figuring out this fly, but Lawson's widely acknowledged expertise as an angler weighs on us here. If he oversaw this engraving, it must have made some sense to him, and he likewise would have assumed it should make sense to his readers. If he *didn't* see the engraving before publication, then most possibilities for meaningful analysis are out the window.

Like previous commentators on this woodcut, we are left to wonder if the engraver had not even seen Lawson's artificial fly (or any other, ever), much less the insect it was supposed to imitate. It seems unlikely to us that the engraver was just doing the best he could based on Lawson's manuscript text, because the finished engraving bears so little resemblance to what the text prescribed.⁷ Thus, even though we're unwilling to entirely despair of making sense of this first known fly illustration, we give the last word on it to Hills, who could not "believe that that admirable angler used anything so inartistic."⁸ True enough, but that won't stop us from wondering about it.

1662: VENABLES, VAUGHN, AND THE UPWARD POINT

In 1662, Colonel Robert Venables's *The Experienc'd Angler* gave us our second tantalizing—and considerably more revealing—glimpse of seventeenth-century artificial flies.⁹ And here again, although in a less exasperating manner, we encounter the pleasant mysteries of what went on, or didn't go on, by way of communication between the author, the printer, and the engraver.

Venables's flies appear as a detail in the fascinating and professionally engraved frontispiece of his book. As can be seen in the accompanying image of the whole frontispiece (opposite), the engraving covered a generous assortment of fishing-related objects, including extremely early looks at rods, an apparent but oddly rendered reel, two floats, various apparent containers (for baits, lines, etc.), a pike hanging from a hook, a few wormish bait creatures, and even a creel, whose design appears to have changed not at all in the more than three centuries since Venables's time. But our most intense interest is in the two small but quite clear illustrations of snelled flies in the lower-right corner of the frame.

In happy contrast to Lawson, Venables gave us a substantial text on the making

and using of flies. He started off by agreeing with Lawson that "it is much better to learn how to make a fly by sight, than by any written direction that can possibly be expressed,"¹⁰ by which we think he meant that it is far easier to learn by watching someone else than by any sort of written instructions. He went on to complain of precisely the nomenclature problem that Lawson struggled less knowingly with, then came to what must have seemed to him the obvious, though incorrect, conclusion.

[S]ome call the flie bred of the water-cricket or creeper a May-flie, and some a stone-flie; some call the cad-bait a May, and some call a short flie, of a sad golden green colour, with short brown wings, a May-flie: and I see no reason but all flies bred in May, are properly enough called May-flies.¹¹

Venables went on to explain that when it comes to the insects involved he "can neither well give their names nor describe them, without too much trouble and prolixity."¹² Admitting that, his best advice was that the angler, "having found the flie which the fish at present affect, let him make one as like it as possibly he can, in colour, shape, and proportion: and for his better imitation let him lay the natural flie before him" as he ties the imitation.¹³

In the extreme lower-right corner of the original engraving we find, in small script, the words "Vaughn Sculp." This is almost certain proof that the engraving was made by Robert Vaughn, a prominent seventeenth-century engraver whose work appeared in many portraits, books, and other works. Among the reasons that the involvement of an accomplished professional like Vaughn in this engraving is notable is that it should give us some assurance that the objects shown are portrayed with some accuracy. This matters because at first glance one might mistakenly assume that the engraver didn't know what he was doing; the two flies are shown in such a position that modern readers would regard them as being upside down. But they're not, because in his 1662 book, Venables gives us the first known example of the fly style that we tend to think of as modern—and recognize by such names as "keel" or "USD"—but is in fact quite old. At least some of Venables's flies were tied to travel through the water point up. And we're sure of this because Venables's text (below) reinforces Vaughn's illustrations.

We hesitate to say that Venables meant for all of his flies to be tied to fish upside down, but in one of his long and (to today's eyes, anyway) convoluted sentences, Venables makes it clear that this is often—if not always—his intent.

Keep in mind as you read the following extended sentence that Venables's hooks had no eyes. Older readers will remember snelled hooks; Venables and his contemporaries fished all the time, whether using flies or bait, with such hooks. Like all fly tiers of his day, Venables began by lashing a length of horsehair (what we would call the leader or tippet) onto the length of the hook shank and then tying the fly over it. In the following excerpt, he described "placing the hair on the inside" of the hook's shank, that being what we would consider the underside, i.e., on the inside of the bend. Then, with no indication that he turned the hook over and continued to tie the fly in the usual position, he proceeded to assemble the fly with the hook in that position, so that the wings were attached in what we would consider a downward position. But read it for yourself.

First, I begin to set on my hook (placing the hair on the inside of its shank, with such coloured silk as I conceive most proper for the flie, beginning at the end of the hook, and when I come to that place which I conceive most proportionable for the wings, then I place such coloured feathers there, as I apprehend most resemble the wings of the flie, and set the points of the wings toward the head, or else I run the feathers (and those must be stripped from the quill or pen, with part of it still cleaving to the feathers) round the hook, and so make them fast, if I turn the feathers round the hook, then I clip away those that are upon the back of the hook, that so (if it be possible) the point of the hook may be forced by the feathers (left on the inside of the hook) to swim upwards; and by this means I conceive the stream will carry your flies' wings in the posture of one flying; whereas if you set the points of the wings backwards, towards the bending of the hook, the stream (if the feathers be gentle as they ought) will fold the points of the wings in the bending of the hook, as I have often found by experience.¹⁴

Got that? We're not entirely sure we have it either, but there is certainly much to think about in this long and tangled sentence, including the apparent reverse-tied wings. But for the purpose of the present discussion, we will limit ourselves to the one point: Venables intended his flies to be fished upside down. We will add only that we have a hard time understanding why clipping the hackles from only the top of the hook, as he recommends, would somehow cause it to ride through the water with the point upward. But he clearly believed it did.

Whatever conclusions we may draw from Venables's tying style, Vaughn's two



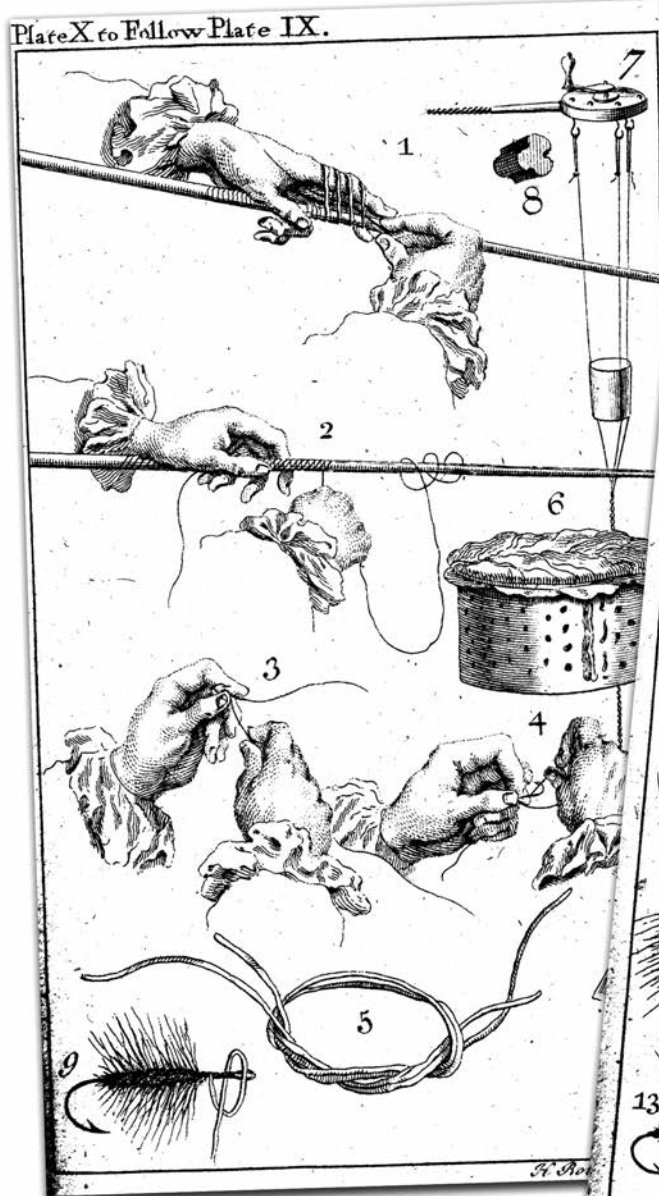
The frontispiece of the 1683 fifth edition of Venables's book. In this edition the engraver had changed, but the new engraver duplicated Vaughn's plate, minus the Vaughn Sculp signature.

engraved flies show no wings and appear to have hackles only extending out from the sides of the body or, depending on which perspective he is attempting to show us, extending out above and below the body. Here we encounter a style issue that has plagued fly illustrators ever since: how to portray the three-dimensional appearance of hackle that has been wound around a fly without obscuring the body. If the flies Vaughn intended to portray here were in fact wrapped entirely round with hackles, he chose for apparently artistic reasons only to show those fibers that extended straight out in some direction. But if the hackles had been clipped on top or bottom or both, then the flies might have looked much like his drawings. (We notice that the long caterpillar-like creature shown directly above the flies likewise has "fibers" extending only out to the sides, but, unfortunately for the present study, although some caterpillars do indeed have fibers sticking out in all directions, others have them only at the sides.)

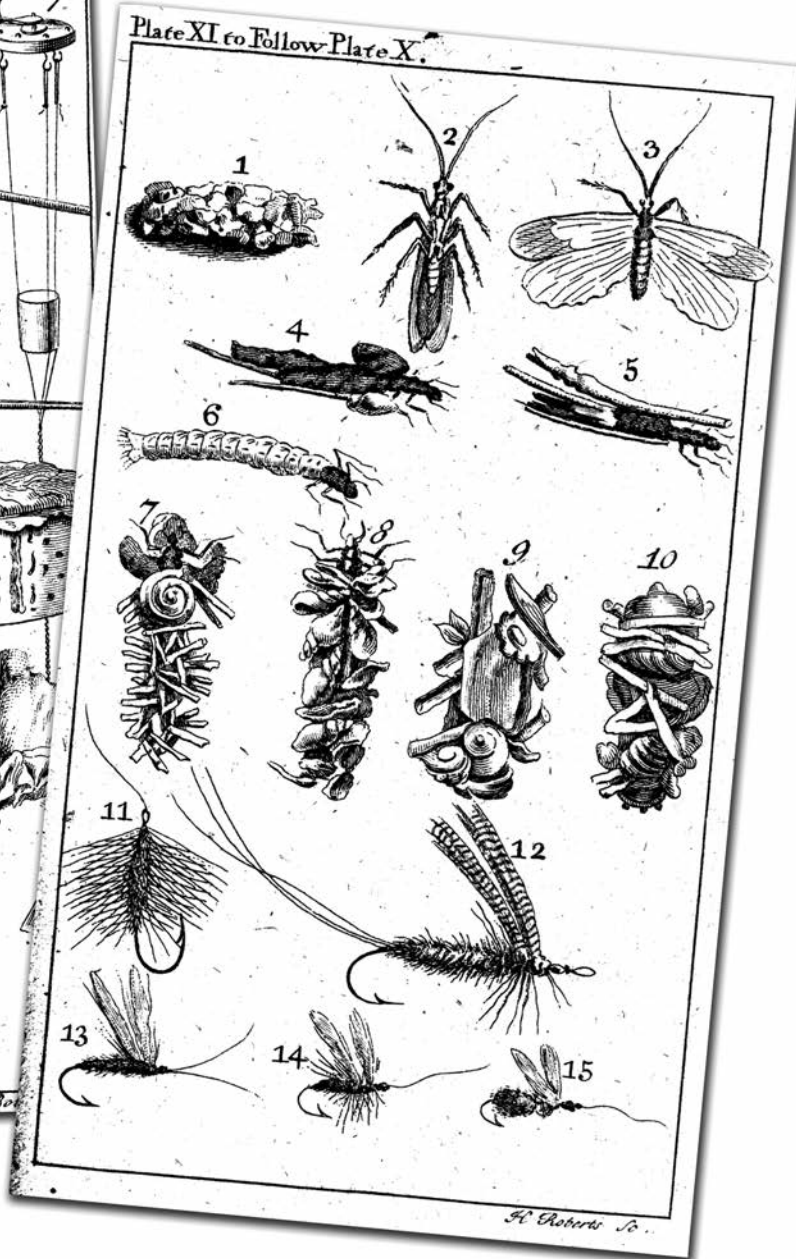
As we say, this complication of illustrating artificial flies continued to challenge artists for many years, many of whom chose only to draw the hackles extending above and below the fly's body and leave it to the reader's imagination to fill in the others.

The proportions of Venables's flies are of considerable interest as well. The hooks, which, if accurately portrayed, appear to be of extraordinarily fine wire, are short shanked, more like those in the *Treatyse* than the long-shanked hook in the Lawson woodcut. The bodies of the flies, which taper quickly toward the head and more gradually toward the tail, are relatively smooth, more like wrapped silk than like any fur dubbing. But Venables's text recommended a very wide and nearly modern variety of natural fly-tying materials, so if he did provide Vaughn with model flies from which to make the drawing, they could have had any of many body materials.

Our best guess of Vaughn's intention in these illustrations was to show flies whose hackles have been wrapped clear around the body. It appears that a larger portion of the body of the fly on the left was left unwrapped by hackle than on the body of the fly on the right, but that could be simply a matter of the artist's perspective or style rather than an actual variation between the two.



Left: Plate X from the Hawkins 1760 edition of *The Compleat Angler* showing the first believable flies to be illustrated anywhere in the literature. Note the fly at bottom left. Right: Plate XI from the same edition, showing five more flies.



1760: HAWKINS AND REALISM FULFILLED

As grateful as we must be for the problematic illustrations provided by Lawson and Venables, we have to wait until 1760 for John Hawkins's edition of Izaak Walton's *Compleat Angler* before we are presented with reasonably understandable illustrations of artificial flies. The engravings in Hawkins's book are beyond price, because among many angling scenes, they depict the first six believable illustrations of artificial flies to be found anywhere in the literature.¹⁵

We have dealt at length with these plates elsewhere, but it is a great indication of their exceptional quality and their historical significance that for the half century following their initial publication they were copied, redrawn, and plagiarized to a quite staggering extent.¹⁶ In the process, the publishers of books on fly fishing abandoned any pretense at delivering new instructional artwork, thereby condemning their readers to seeing the same handful of flies repeated endlessly across numerous completely unrelated works. We find obvious renditions of the "Hawkins flies" in Best's 1787 *A Concise*

Treatise on the Art of Angling,¹⁷ in Duhamel du Monceau's *Traité general des pêches*,¹⁸ *The Sportsman's Dictionary* of 1792,¹⁹ Osbaldiston's *The British Sportsman* from the same year,²⁰ Sañez Reguart's *Diccionario Historico de los Artes de la Pesca Nacional* of 1795,²¹ Daniel's *Rural Sports* of 1801,²² Scott's *British Field Sports* of 1818,²³ and finally, in Blaine's *Encyclopaedia of Rural Sports*, which was published in 1840.²⁴ Furthermore, the flies in the Hawkins plates appear to have been copied and somewhat redrawn for the 1806 edition of Bowlker's *Art of Angling*²⁵ and for Howitt's *Angler's Manual* of 1808.²⁶

The first good-quality illustrations of flies that we can be sure were not copies of the Hawkins set appeared in Bainbridge's *The Fly-Fisher's Guide* in 1816,²⁷ followed by Scotcher's *The Fly Fisher's Legacy* three years later, although the latter work had such a restricted circulation that copies were scarce then and vanishingly rare today.²⁸ It wasn't until 1826 that Bowlker's *Art of Angling* gained a bespoke frontispiece that illustrated thirty flies whose dressings could be found in the text.²⁹ More important, in 1836, Ronalds's *The Fly-Fisher's Entomology* marked the beginning of a trend toward every authoritative book on fly fishing having illustrations showing flies,³⁰ and this was strengthened by works such as W. Blacker's *Art of Angling* of 1842 and 1843,³¹ Scrope's *Days and Nights of Salmon Fishing* in 1843,³² Stoddart's *Angler's Companion* in 1847,³³ Jones's *Guide to Norway* in 1848,³⁴

Wheatley's *The Rod and Line* in 1849,³⁵ and Ephemera's *The Book of the Salmon* in 1850.³⁶ Thereafter, the number of illustrated books increased by leaps and bounds.

It is clear from the foregoing that in the 1830s and 1840s there was a near-revolution in fly illustrations; half a dozen books with original (i.e., not just blatant copies of Hawkins's flies) illustrations were printed in the 1840s alone. This was in dramatic contrast to the half century before 1816, when the gene pool of illustrations of flies was limited, for all intents and purposes, to the Hawkins plates and the tiresome parade of images derived from them.

The history of early fly illustration as presented here is noteworthy as history for its own sake, but it also serves to emphasize the monumental importance of our opening point: the American Museum of Fly Fishing has in its possession a set of flies, the earliest of which are

known to have been tied barely thirty years after the Hawkins plates were published (1760) and twenty-seven years before Bainbridge's plates appeared in his *The Fly-Fisher's Guide* (1816). Furthermore, the majority of the flies in the museum's collection are Irish, even though the first published plates showing Irish patterns did not appear until 1842, fifty-three years after the earliest flies in the Harris collection were tied.

It is obvious that these flies, whose survival seems almost miraculous, are of tremendous importance, and while the history of how the earliest group of the Harris flies came to be preserved is almost as fascinating as the patterns themselves, to fully understand that history we must start with a side trip into the murky history of the British colonization of Ireland and the improbable story of the Gregory family.



This may be the original artwork for the plate in Bainbridge's *The Fly-Fisher's Guide*. The patterns make an interesting comparison with the flies that Richard Gregory collected during the same period. Image courtesy of John Austin.

GREGORYS GALORE

We will dispense with the early history of the Gregorys by noting that they were granted lands in the Cromwellian “plantings” after the conquest of Ireland during the seventeenth century. The famine that followed Cromwell’s campaign was compounded by plague, and although estimates of the loss of civilian life vary wildly, a substantial proportion of the common folk died, while another 50,000 were transported to America and other countries to serve as indentured labor. Cromwell gave confiscated Irish land to some of his supporters in lieu of financial compensation (thus the term *plantings*, referring to Cromwell’s imposing of his supporters on the resident population) and to ensure that he could rely on a loyal population should the situation deteriorate once his armies had returned to England.

Very little was done to rectify this situation after the Restoration of the Monarchy in 1666 because it suited the crown just as much as it did Cromwell, but it should be noted that the Cromwellian plantings only ever accounted for a small minority of the landlords in Ireland. After 1691, Penal Laws were passed that, among many other discriminatory measures, excluded Catholics from politics and created what became known as the Protestant Ascendancy. This allowed Protestants to dominate Irish political life throughout the entire eighteenth century. Although the families concerned are often described as “Anglo-Irish,” they mostly saw themselves as being Irish but loyal to the British crown. The Gregorys were such a family.

Our story begins with Robert Gregory (1727–1810), who can be regarded as the scion of the Gregory clan. Robert was known to the family as “the Nabob,” and he had stowed away to India while still a schoolboy, his destiny decreeing that he would become first a director and then the chairman of the East India Company. Gregory returned to England in 1768, beginning the family interest in politics by becoming the Liberal member of parliament for Maidstone and subsequently for Rochester. He whiled away his spare time by buying a town house and a couple of large estates in England, and furthered his interests in Ireland by acquiring the Coole estate from Oliver Martyn of Tullyra in 1768 and the Ballylee estate in South Galway from the Burkes. In India, Gregory married Maria Auchmuty of Galway, and the couple had three sons: the eldest, Robert (henceforth Robert Gregory II), born in 1754, then Richard in 1761, and finally William in 1762.

Here we should lay down a warning that Ireland is like nowhere else and that

Irish place names have a very strong tendency to be descriptive, as a consequence of which it isn’t uncommon for them to be duplicated all over the map. *Coole* is a case in point, because it is an Anglicization of the Irish *Cúil*, which means “a corner, or an angle.” There is a Coole in Westmeath, but the one we want is in Galway, and the Nabob’s estate—which was sometimes known as Kiltartan (literally “Tartan’s Church”), after the parish and barony within which the demesne (that is, all the land attached to the manor) lay—had lands amounting to about 7,500 acres.

Gregory built a large house with many offices and a walled garden before he set about improving the tenanted farms, which varied in size from 3 to 30 acres. The house was a large but especially practical four-square affair with a slate roof; it had nineteen rooms and about thirty outbuildings, including five sets of stables, three coach houses, greenhouses, hot houses, a laundry, and a forge, besides sundry pigsties and dairies. Beyond these, the main residence was surrounded by ornamental gardens, plantations, and orchards as suited a man of almost infinite financial means. One of the curiosities of the area even today is that it is generally low lying, with a tendency to bog, and that its limestone

base encourages seasonal lakes, or turloughs, to appear from time to time. This accounts for a most noticeable oddity on the local maps, which is that the courses of many of the rivers about Coole do not end at the sea—instead, they vanish into the ground, sometimes to reappear and sometimes not. And with these topographical and hydrological peculiarities, we return to the fisheries that are, after all, at the heart of our story.

The property lies on the road known today as the N18, just north of Gort, about 25 miles south of Galway city and some 20 miles or so north of Ennis. Before too many years have passed, the M18 motorway, currently under construction, will split the estate that the Gregorys knew in two. But in their time it included all the land between the Coole River and Coole Lough to the west and the Annagh River to the east. Gort itself was not part of the estate, but the Gregorys’ lands ran as far south as Russaun on the Beagh River and as far north as Carrowbaun and Lissatunny.³⁷ Although there would have been plenty of trout, pike, perch, and eel fishing locally, the main attractions to a wealthy angler would have been the great limestone loughs of Corrib and Mask to the north of Galway city and the salmon fishing on the Shannon south of Ennis.



A portion of the map of Ireland from the acclaimed *Atlas Universel*, published in 1757, featuring the area where Robert Gregory later established his family home (circled in green). From Robert de Vaugondy, Gilles and Robert de Vaugondy, Didier, *Atlas Universel* (Paris: the authors and Boudet, 1757), map 18. Used with permission of the David Rumsey Map Collection, www.davidrumsey.com.



Zoffany's painting, Colonel Mordaunt's Cockmatch, reproduced by permission of the Tate Gallery, London. Robert Gregory is caught in flagrante, bottom right.

Richard Gregory (1761–1839) is the son of most interest to us, because he was one of the two men who gathered together many of the flies that have become known as the Harris collection. Richard was educated at Harrow and at Trinity College, Cambridge, and—like so many younger sons faced with the choice of the army or the church—opted for the former, becoming a captain in the Coldstream Guards. His relative, Vere Gregory, wrote that Richard spent very little time in Ireland, although the remarkable collection of Irish flies that Richard assembled casts a certain amount of doubt on that statement.³⁸

Richard Gregory left the army after he was held to be responsible for the retreat of troops under his command during the siege of Valenciennes of 1793, when he was in charge of an outpost near Lemain. He returned to London, where he stayed in the family's town house in Berners Street, and became a prominent member of the Oriental Club, before he unexpectedly came into possession of Coole upon the death of his father in 1810. Richard inherited because his older brother, Robert II, had been cut out of their parents' will for the sin of persistent gambling, a habit of which Robert I entirely disapproved. Robert II had been given many last chances, and must have felt himself safe in India with his father ensconced back in Europe, but his luck ran out in the most improbable fashion one day when his father chanced to wander down the Strand. The old man's eye lit upon a Zoffany painting known as *Colonel Mordaunt's Cockmatch*, which

showed—in great detail—an event that had been held in Lucknow not many months before. One of the figures standing by the pit seemed vaguely familiar, so the Nabob entered the gallery and enquired if there might be a key to the scene. Unfortunately for his son and heir, there was. It was an open-and-shut case; at bottom right in the picture, wearing a green coat and holding a white game cock, was his son, and, if matters could possibly have been made worse, one of the three men in the foreground was identified in the key as the “cock-fighter to Mr. Gregory.” The unlucky Robert never returned to Ireland and died in India in 1814.

Richard Gregory was a lover of the arts and ran the estate through his agent Edmund Lombard Hunt, who lived at Ballynamantin House, *Beúl Atha na Meantán* in Irish, the translation of which is priceless: the “mouth of the ford of the toothless men.” Gregory gave his address as 56 Berners Street and certainly spent a good deal of time abroad, particularly in Italy (he owned a house in Florence), but he must have been a keen trout and salmon fisherman if the flies he left to us were anything to go by (we can only wonder if he also fished the trout streams of northern Italy).

Thanks to his father, Richard was a very wealthy man, but one with an unconventional love life. In the early 1790s he fell in love with one Isabella Nimmo, the daughter of a Scottish family, who was boarding at a school in London. Not to be discouraged by a minor obstacle such as this, Richard dis-

guised Isabella as a boy and put her up in his father's steward's house, where she became known as “Jack the sailor.” The penalty for a single false slip by either of the lovers was extremely high, but Richard got away with it, and this probably accounts for why he was in Ireland a good deal between 1789 and 1810, the period within which the dates of most of the very early Irish “Harris” flies fall. Isabella was popular with one and all, the household staff must have been complicit, and so his father never found out.

Gregory was able to marry his love after his father died, the relationship lasting until Isabella died in 1833, although it was not without its challenges. Richard's sister-in-law, Anne Trench, dealt with the situation by ignoring Isabella completely, despite the fact that Gregory had been on friendly enough terms with her father for the pair to go fishing together; there is a note attached to one of the flies (1991.020.033) mentioning “Colonel Wm. Trench late Earl Clantarty.” William Power Keating Trench died on 27 April 1805, which would date the fly to before that date. One of Anne's brothers was the Archbishop of Tuam and another the Archdeacon of Tuam, so the Church of Ireland establishment must have breathed a sigh of relief when Isabella died, only to descend into a state of shock a couple of years later, when Gregory married her maid, Christian Heer, who died in 1837.³⁹

At some point Richard suffered what is described as a stroke, which left his face “twisted” and spoiled his good looks, and he did not have any children by either marriage, which meant that on his death in 1839, the estate passed to his younger brother William, who survived him by only nine months. In his will, Richard endowed a scholarship at his old school, Harrow; founded its Gregory Medal for Greek verse; and bequeathed many rare books to its library.

THE FLIES MOVE ON

The next few paragraphs have progressively less and less to do with the Harris collection, other than to highlight some of its more interesting connections and to deal with loose ends left by earlier articles, but they are essential reading nonetheless. William Gregory (1762–1840) was married to the aforementioned Anne Trench, of Garbally, Ballinasloe, a member of a staunchly Tory Ascendancy family. He rose to high office as Under-Secretary of State for Ireland, a post he held for seventeen years. In government, he was chiefly noted for his opposition to Catholic emancipation, which doomed him to the political wilderness when it was finally granted in 1829. It is of note,

though, that William's relative, Vere Gregory, wrote that William was "devoted to angling, and tied all his own flies."⁴⁰ William's fly-dressing outfit was still in the family in 1943, and it contained many samples of gut and cock hackles that were pronounced to have come from the "old Irish black cock strain" by no less an authority than John Henderson, the prominent Lough Arrow fly dresser.⁴¹

It is intriguing to speculate that some of the unidentified early flies in the Harris collection might have been tied by William and that his connection with the collection could be much stronger than would appear at first, especially given that his fly-dressing kit was preserved for so long. Vere Gregory donated the outfit to the Marquess Conyngham, who was a keen fly tier and collector, and whose son, the Earl of Mountcharles, was showing every sign of becoming as keen an angler as his father. The flies that Richard Gregory collected are not mentioned in Vere Gregory's book, and it is possible that they were part of this gift, although it is equally likely that they somehow found their way directly into the hands of J. C. Gardiner of Galway, through whose hands many of the other flies preserved in the Harris collection passed.

In any case, Robert Gregory III (1790–1847) inherited the estate on his father's death in 1840, but he too enjoyed it for only a handful of years before dying of "famine fever" after visiting ill tenants on the estate. Robert III was a generous and caring landlord, and spent much time at Coole Park restoring the extensive outbuildings, which his uncle Richard had allowed to fall into such disrepair that many of the roofs had collapsed. He married Elizabeth O'Hara in 1815, and their son, William Henry Gregory (1816–1892) continued the male line.

William Henry honored the Gregorys' connection with politics when he became the Tory member of parliament for Dublin in 1842. He inherited the estate on the death of his father some five years later, which was something of a mixed blessing, given that it came with £50,000 of "encumbrances" in the form of mortgages and so forth. The debt had doubled by 1855, thanks to a combination of William Henry's penchant for horse racing, rents left unpaid during the famine, and some spectacularly poor choices of agent: he went through five in a dozen years, one of them defrauding him of no less than £6,000, which at a conservative estimate would amount to about £70,000 today.⁴² William Henry sold off most of the estate at auction, with the exception of Coole and the



The Gregory Mausoleum near Coole Park, County Galway, August 2016. Three members of the family are interred in the vault: Robert Gregory III, his widow, Elizabeth, and their son, William Henry Gregory.

parish of Kiltartan, the retention of which allowed him to keep the core of his inheritance. His fortunes changed for the better when he was appointed governor of Ceylon and married Elizabeth Bowdoin, a wealthy widow, in 1872, but she died only a year later. Gregory was knighted in 1877 and married Augusta Persse in March 1880, when he was sixty-four and she twenty-seven.

At this point, readers may be getting restless because we seem to have drifted far away from fishing, but have patience, because the story of the Harris flies is linked to some of the most momentous events in Ireland's literary and political history. William Henry Gregory was somewhat sympathetic to the Catholic cause, a compassionate landlord and, indeed, a friend of Daniel O'Connell, the champion of Irish Catholic emancipation. Sadly for him, he has the misfortune to be remembered for his part in the creation of the "Gregory clause" of the relief laws passed in response to the Irish famine, which became law shortly before he inherited the estate. The clause he proposed was to have been a two-step process in which landlords would be reimbursed a significant fraction of the emigration costs of their tenants—but only if the tenants concerned possessed less than a quarter of an acre of land. Tenants who possessed more than a quarter of an acre were to get no relief at all.

As it turned out, the amendment that made it onto the statute book could hardly have had a worse effect on the poor folk of Ireland. Under Gregory's original proposal, the Poor Law Guardians would have found themselves liable for much of the emigration expenses of

people who had no wish to leave their native land, but this part of the amendment was defeated, with utterly disastrous results. Caught in the famine, tenants who had more than a quarter of an acre were denied any relief and clung on to their properties until starvation or emigration were the only alternatives, while their landlords found themselves liable for the entirety of the rates on smallholdings, which, of course, the poverty-stricken tenants could not afford to pay. This triggered evictions and generated much righteous ill-feeling among the mainly Catholic tenants against the mainly Protestant property owners, the memory of which would later play a significant part in fueling the "Troubles," the popular euphemism for the catastrophic events of the Irish Civil War that followed so shortly on the heels of the War of Independence.

Gregory appears to have had little idea of the trouble the enactment of his clause caused until he returned to Coole after his father's death. He is said to have been so shocked at what he found that he resolved to look after his tenants come what may. In this he largely succeeded, and the local people regarded him as a good landlord; Gregory could claim that he never evicted a tenant in his forty-two years at Coole Park.

Although once described in an article in the *American Fly Fisher* as "an ancestor of the Irish literary figure, Lady Gregory," in truth Richard Gregory was the great uncle of her husband, and so the two were only related by marriage.⁴³ Lady Gregory's maiden name was Isabella Augusta Persse and, as noted above, she enters our story when she became the second wife of William

Henry Gregory. Her connection with Coole, the Irish Literary Revival, and the Abbey Theatre were destined to make the estate famous, not least because among many others, the poets Yeats, Shaw, Synge, and O'Casey visited and carved their initials on the "autograph tree." Yeats lived only 3 miles away from Coole and wrote no less than five poems about the place as tribute to the Persse family's encouragement of the arts and the happy times he had spent there. Yeats and Augusta Gregory had much in common, both being members of the Irish Protestant Ascendancy, and though the depth of their support for Irish nationalism must have been extremely ill matched at times, Augusta Gregory's political position shifted decisively toward it after her husband's death. Surviving photographs make her look on the dusty side of staid, but she had a wild side, and long after her death it was discovered that she had had an affair with the poet Wilfrid Scawen Blunt barely two years after she was married.

The death of William Henry and Augusta's only son, William Robert, an accomplished artist who was an airman in World War I, inspired Yeats to write "An Irish Airman Foresees His Death," "In Memory of Major Robert Gregory," and "Shepherd and Goatherd." It is an epitaph for more than the man, for with that young man's death went the last hope for Coole and all that it stood for in Yeats's mind. On William Robert's death, it was resolved to sell most of the property, a process that took two years to complete. Seven years later, Coole House and the plantations surrounding it were sold to the Irish Forestry Commission, but Augusta Gregory was allowed to remain until her death in 1932. The house then lay abandoned for a decade before it was finally demolished in 1941. All that remains of Coole today is a nature reserve—and a set of the oldest flies in the world.⁴⁴

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The Selch-Bakwin Fly Room



Ogden Pleissner's oil painting The Battenkill hangs on the wall in the new Selch-Bakwin fly room.



Cabinets along the walls exhibit the works of some of history's greatest tiers, and the new tying table is always ready for a visitor to try his or her hand at the vise.



Plexiglass panels adorned with historic illustrations about fly tying.

THE MUSEUM OPENED its Selch-Bakwin Fly Room in August. It is a place where science, art, and sport meet, allowing people to tie a fly and browse through a beautifully presented, exceptional display of historical flies while learning about the fascinating lives of the master tiers.

We had long wished for a way to exhibit a larger portion of the fly collection. Using a small portion of the museum's gift shop (about 300 square feet), Deputy Director Yoshi Akiyama designed an innovative space. Two plexiglass walls delineate the boundaries of the new room; they are artfully decorated with definitions and illustrations from historic fly-tying manuals. The cabinets are inspired by the original Mary Orvis Marbury panels: the front and back of each of the doors are used to showcase these mini works of art. The open doors reveal more exhibit space inside.

The idea came to life with a facilities grant from the Vermont Arts Council matched by AMFF Trustee Nick Selch.

Nick co-named the new fly room in honor of his uncles, Pete and Mike Bakwin, who introduced him to fly fishing in the 1970s and to the museum in 2009. Longtime museum friend/rodmaker/woodworker Jim Becker built the cabinets. In October, the finished project received an award of excellence from the Vermont Historical Society.

The room features history's greatest tiers, including the Dettles, the Darbys, Preston Jennings, Lee Wulff, Helen Shaw, Keith Fulsher, Megan Boyd, and Mary Orvis Marbury, to name but a few. A mere glance around the room offers inspiration. Conveniently located at the center of the new space is a beautiful tying table, which stands at the ready with vises and materials for any visitor to take a seat and practice this storied skill.

SAMANTHA PITCHER
ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF DEVELOPMENT

John F. Betts III

4 October 1937—31 August 2018

When John Betts was named Fly Rod & Reel's Angler of the Year in 2006, writer Darrel Martin asked me for a quote. I can't find the several paragraphs I sent, but these lines made it into the article: "John is a living reminder that learning is as much play as work," I said; he "studies how one thing leads to another, how advances in thought and technology in any field might ultimately set the stage for change, however subtle or grand, in our sport. Fly fishing is lucky to have the likes of John Betts paying attention."

John was a great friend to the museum. He manned our booth at the Denver fly-fishing show. He wrote multiple articles for the American Fly Fisher and received our Austin Hogan Award in 1998. To celebrate the museum's thirtieth anniversary, John painted a watercolor, The Bubble, which was then reproduced in a limited-edition remarqued run. "I love the subtlety that permeates this piece," wrote Art Director Sara Wilcox in our fiftieth-anniversary issue, "from the delicate shades of blue and green to a special moment, one that is perhaps the essence of fly fishing, conveyed without words." One of those prints hangs in my home office.

We include here remembrances of John Betts by two of his other editors. Michael Hackney is proprietor of the Eclectic Angler and Reel Lines Press. He is an angler, angling author, historian, fly tier, rod builder, line and leader furler, and reelsmith (including 3D-printed ones). Art Scheck is a former editor of American Angler, Fly Tyer, Saltwater Fly Fishing, and Scientific Anglers Fly Fishing Quarterly; the author of Fly Rod Building Made Easy, Tying Better Flies, Fly-Fish Better, and A Fishing Life Is Hard Work; and a recently retired college English instructor. Both were good friends of John Betts.

—EDITOR



John Betts tying at a trade show (date unknown). From the collection of Tandy Wheeler and Andrew Betts.

INNOVATOR, AUTHOR, ARTIST

THE FLY-FISHING COMMUNITY has lost an amazingly talented and innovative man. My friend and mentor, John Betts, passed away peacefully on the morning of Friday, August 31. John's passing leaves a void that will never be filled—he was that unique, a man dedicated to the sport and art of fly fishing.

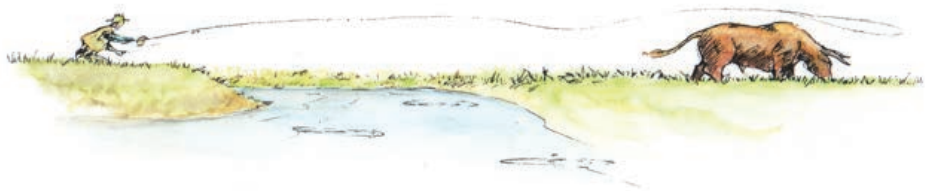
Like countless other fly fishers, my first exposure to John was through his fly tying and pioneering work with synthetic materials. An article in *Sports Illustrated* in 1981, wittily titled *Gotcha! Hook, Line and Lingerie*,* revealed John's work to the fly-fishing world. His notoriety and influence grew from there. Now, almost forty years later, synthetic materials like microfibers, Z-lon, and Betts' Zing are commonplace on the tier's bench.

Over the past decade, I've had the great fortune and honor to work closely with John, publishing his writing and art. John did not use e-mail; our correspondence was conducted via telephone, handwritten letters, and exquisitely packed boxes of handwritten manuscripts. I have gained a unique perspective on how John thought and approached fly fishing, innovation, and life. There are many fascinating stories that I could share, but a few stand out and exemplify John's life.

I'll start with that 1981 *Sports Illustrated* article. According to the article, John's motivation for experimenting with synthetic materials was twofold. The first was economic; fly-tying materials were expensive even in the 1970s. The second was personal; John became increasingly uncomfortable with the need to harvest birds and animals for feathers and fur. Those of us who got to know John well soon came to realize that rarely were things that simple! John's thoughts, writing, and art are built on myriad layers and woven from connections of ideas and designs that embodied his philosophy, vision, and intellect. Such was the case for his pursuit of synthetic fly-tying materials.

I recall in one of our early phone calls that John was genuinely concerned that fly-fishing might come under attack by animal-rights activists in the same way that hunting had. The thought of losing the sport that he so loved set John on the path of discovery and innovation. This led to his TAG (touch-and-go) hook. John often told me that the TAG hook was his most important contribution to fly fishing. He explained with boyish excitement the moment he realized the essence of fly fishing really can be boiled down to the instant the fish takes the fly. It's at that instant that the fly tier and angler has mastered his or her craft. The subsequent fight, landing, and release are secondary to the initial excitement of the take. John explained how he focused his thoughts on that instant from both the angler's and the fish's perspectives. From that realization—and months of experimentation and refinement—came

*www.si.com/vault/1981/05/04/825592/gotcha-hook-line-and-lingerie-nothings-sacred-when-john-betts-scouts-synthetics-to-use-in-his-revolutionary-flies; accessed 23 October 2018.



The approach should be careful and the forward loop controlled to avoid frightening the fish.

John's whimsical sense of humor permeated his work.
Watercolor by John Betts. Used with permission by the Reel Lines Press.



Rare packages of TAG hooks.
Photo by Michael Hackney.



One of thousands of detailed pencil sketches. Pencil sketch by John Betts. Used with permission by the Reel Lines Press.

the TAG hook. The hook, in its commercial incarnation, has a small wire loop (a second eye) rather than a sharp point at its business end. The idea is that a fish will take the fly and hold it fast in its mouth for a few seconds before realizing the deception and spitting the imitation out. The angler enjoys the thrill of the rise and take, and the fish is unharmed and none the worse for the sport. Simply brilliant. I fish with flies tied on TAG hooks several times a year and recall warmly the excitement in John's voice when he described them to me.

Like John, his writing was unique—both in content and expression. John did not use a typewriter or computer; his manuscripts were handwritten in his inimitable style. He illustrated his books by hand with pen and ink and watercolors. When I started working with John to publish our first book together, *Reels & Making Them* (2011), I had no idea what I was in for. In my naiveté I thought I would transcribe his handwriting to a word-processing file and publish a typical twentieth-century book. But, when I saw the first few pages of the manuscript, something came over me; the calligraphy, pasted-in photos and illustrations, and even the corrections were just as interesting as the content itself. The book would be diminished if sanitized to uniform type on a sterile white page. I attempted to scan and photograph the pages, but something was missing—the subtle dimensionality that these techniques camouflaged. I almost gave up, but perseverance led to the idea to shine light across the page from the side as it was scanned. This added the subtle shadows and depth that captured the honesty and artistry of John's work.

With each book we published, John revealed another was in the wings "waiting to see the light of day," as he would say. Each book was faithfully captured and published as we developed a rhythm and mutual trust. In retrospect, I realize that John was leading me down the path to publish his magnum opus: *Patterns* (2018). As I look back at my early notes, there were

hints of its existence. Then, when we worked on *Synthetic Flies* (2013), John would tease me by hiding sample pages interleaved in letters and the manuscript for me to discover. A few days later he'd follow up the mailing with a phone call and ask with impish delight, "Did you find them, the pages?"

Patterns truly is John's masterwork and exemplifies his ability to interconnect design, concepts, and experiences, which he describes in his dedication to Muriel Foster:

The title, *Patterns*, refers to several things. Some are obvious like the fly patterns, but others may not be as easy to see. For example there is the lettering, composition of the pages, style of the images, and that of the insects on or in the water.

I've tried to catch all of the mistakes and did not succeed. Some of the corrections are easy to see, all were done by cut-and-paste. I had three problems when I restarted the manuscript. First, the paper it was originally done on was no longer made; second, I'd worn out the pen—also no longer made, and last my hands didn't work as they used to. It was hard to get the patches to match up with what they were patched into.

John always approached his work holistically, from the paper, to the ink, to the art and writing itself.

John's influence touched all aspects of fly fishing and countless anglers. He developed realistic and effective fly patterns, pioneered synthetic tying materials, turned wooden fly rods from native hardwoods, handcrafted elegant fly reels, developed a superb synthetic fly line, and developed the innovative TAG hook. He was an innovator, inventor, artist, craftsman, author, and illustrator. His work is instantly recognizable as "Betts." John will be greatly missed by everyone in the fly-fishing community, by those who knew him, and by me. Rest in peace, my friend.

—MICHAEL HACKNEY
GROTON, MASSACHUSETTS

ALL THE ARTS OF ANGLING

Of all the fly fishers and writers with whom I worked during my years as a magazine editor, John Betts was by a long cast the most compleat angler. He practiced—no, he reveled in—all the arts of angling. John tied exquisite flies, and by the 1990s he was making them without using a vise or bobbin. He taught himself to make hooks, braided and tapered fly lines, furred leaders, wooden rods like those used centuries ago, and reels. He loved the history of the sport and its attendant crafts, and he loved to share his vast knowledge in the written works he sent to *American Angler* and *Fly Tyer*. John was an artist, too, and any envelope containing one of his articles also held a few of his elegant drawings of real or artificial trout-stream insects.

Some fly fishers consider themselves purists (whatever that means), but John attained a level of purity that I can only call transcendent. Sometime in the 1990s, he sent me an article about fishing with dry flies tied on hooks that weren't just barbless, but actually pointless. He broke each hook partway down the bend so that it couldn't stick in a trout's lip or jaw. For John, duping a trout into mistaking the fake insect for a real one constituted the entire thrill. He no longer had any need to capture the fish, to possess it even temporarily. To see the rise and feel the briefest of tugs was enough. And he had no desire to stick a hook into a living thing. Reactions when the piece appeared in print included many that called the author crazy or worse. Although I continued to use hooks that had good sharp points, I saw the logic of John's argument. One casts a dry fly for reasons other than efficiency in killing trout; and those reasons, for John, no longer required even watching one's fly rod bend against the pull of a fish.

During one of our phone chats about that article, John asked me if I really wanted to defend the idea of finding

amusement and pleasure in the terror and, for all we know, the pain of another living thing. He thought more, and more deeply, about angling than anyone else I have known, and his own sporting ethics had moved beyond even catch and release.

He thought ethically about writing, too. John wrote a history column for the revived *Fly Tyer* magazine in the 1990s. His historical articles ran longer—sometimes much longer—than most of the pieces in fishing magazines, but our readers enjoyed and learned as much from them as I did. But once he'd covered the topics that most interested him, John gave up the column. He just called one day to tell me that he was done, that he had said all that he wanted to say on the subject. He didn't write about fly-tying history for the money, and he didn't want to pound out copy because he had a deadline to meet. He'd given our readers his best, and he would not give them anything less. I cannot think of another writer who gave up a guaranteed byline and quarterly paycheck, small though it was.

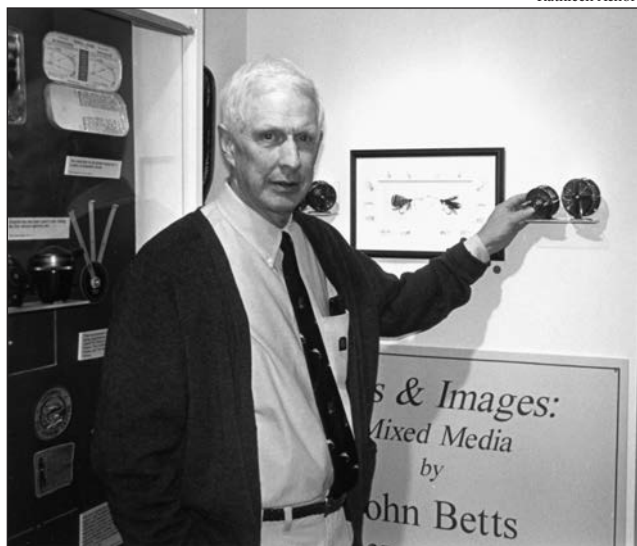
Talking with John was never dull, and the course of every conversation wandered and turned like a stream flowing through flat country. I have known few minds like his.

John had a bit of the poet in him, too. He was not the first man to see in the brief, hazardous lives of adult mayflies a metaphor for our own struggles and short existences. During one of our rambling chats, he speculated—John loved to speculate—that perhaps mayflies are so important to fly fishers not just because trout eat the delicate insects, but because even the least poetically inclined angler sees, or more accurately feels, that metaphor as he watches an emergence or an aerial mating dance or a spinner fall.

A life well lived is always too brief, but John's brief existence enriched the sport and his friends.

—ART SCHECK
WILLIAMSTON, SOUTH CAROLINA

Kathleen Achor



Left: John Betts at the June 1997 opening of his exhibition *Flies and Images: Mixed Media* at the museum. It featured thirty-two pieces by Betts—twenty-eight mixed-media pieces (watercolors and drawings accompanied by tied flies) and four hand-built reels.

Below: John Betts's *The Bubble*. Watercolor, 1997.



AMFF Honors Rachel Finn with the 2018 Izaak Walton Award

All photos by Jack McCoy



Rachel Finn accepts the 2018 Izaak Walton Award from AMFF Board President Karen Kaplan.



Kathy Guarino, Trustee Alan Guarino, and Trustee Pat Watson enjoying the festivities.



Rachel Finn is congratulated by Ed Blank.

FOR THOSE WHO know fly-fishing guide Rachel Finn, an event in her honor is sure to be a great party. That is exactly what happened on November 1 when her friends, family, colleagues, and AMFF supporters gathered at the Boston College Club to celebrate the presentation of the 2018 Izaak Walton Award.

The museum established the Izaak Walton Award in 2014 to honor and celebrate individuals who live by the *Compleat Angler* philosophy. Their passion for the sport of fly fishing and involvement in their angling community provides inspiration for others and promotes the legacy of leadership for future generations.

The evening began with a reception overlooking the city, and then guests converged for the evening program. Nick Dawes of Heritage Auctions was kind enough to make the trip from New York to preside over the live auction, which included a Scott Radian fly rod, an overnight stay at Saint Hubert's Lodge, a Reel Women Fly Fishing Adventures trip, a day of art immersion donated by the auctioneer, and a piece of Rachel Finn's own original art: a beautiful fish collage. Rachel—who

lives in New York's Adirondack Mountains and is head guide at the Hungry Trout in Wilmington—is not only a wonderful guide, but also an accomplished artist with an MFA from Yale.

As part of the program, guests were invited to share stories about Rachel, which ranged from heartwarming to hilarious. In her acceptance speech, Rachel impressed and amused the crowd by admitting to have diligently read *The Compleat Angler* multiple times and concluding that Walton may well have been the first trout bum!

We would like to thank everyone who made journeys from near and far for the evening's festivities. We greatly appreciate the following sponsors and auction donors: Lindsay Agness, Drew Chicone, Eugene Conroy, Costa, Deerfield Fly Rods, Douglas Outdoors, E & J Gallo, Rachel Finn, Gringo Jack's, Jim Heckman, Mud Dog Saltwater Flies, Orvis, Patagonia, Reel Women Fly Fishing Adventures, Saint Hubert's Lodge & Club, Scott Fly Rods, the Silver Trout, Brett Smith, and George Van Hook.





AMFF Ambassador Mike Rice shares a story about Rachel from the podium.



Rachel Finn was all smiles when greeting Karen Carbone (left) and Joanne Hessney.



Rachel Finn celebrating the evening with her family. From left: Taylor Finn, Rachel's nephew; Ted Finn, Rachel's brother; and Norman Finn, Rachel's father.



Rachel Finn unwrapping a gift.



Sara Low (right) chats with Sean Platt (left) and Bob Lamson.

Milward & Sons Salesman's Hook Wallet: Maine Agency

by Jerry Girard

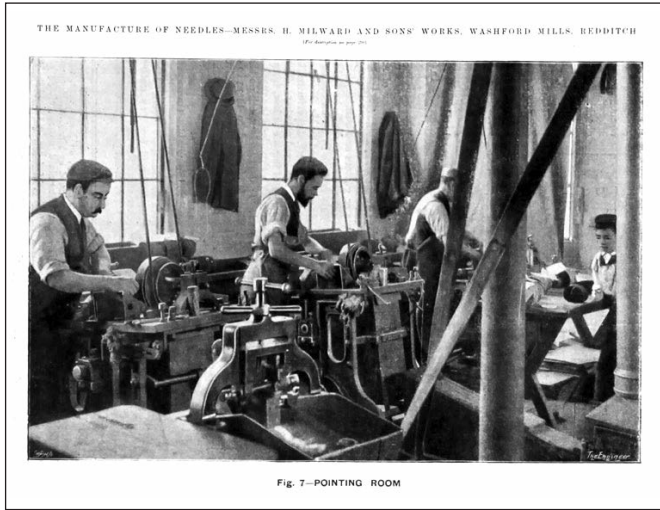


Fig. 7—POINTING ROOM

Above: The manufacture of needles: pointing room, Milward & Sons, 1898. www.gracesguide.co.uk/File:Im1898EnV85-p299a.jpg.

Right: The stamping room: making an impression for needle eyes, Milward & Sons, 1898. www.gracesguide.co.uk/File:Im1898EnV85-p299b.jpg.

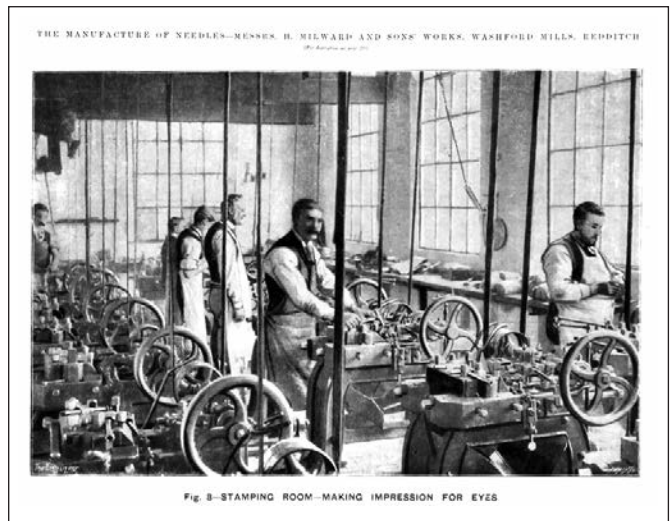


Fig. 8—STAMPING ROOM—MAKING IMPRESSION FOR EYES

DURING A VISIT TO a Maine collector of antique items made in his state, I was shown a salesman's hook wallet. It's labeled MILWARD & SONS MAINE AGENCY (USA) and, based on the type of leather used, it is estimated to be from the 1830s or 1840s. The wallet was purchased from another Maine collector, who owned it for many decades.

No other wallet of its type has been found in Maine. I purchased it because it is unique and worthy, not only as a fishing collectible from the state of Maine, but as an item for further research.

Henry Milward & Sons began as Milward's Needles in Washford Mills, Redditch, England, in 1730. By the early nineteenth century, Henry Milward also manufactured fish hooks with his two sons, John and Victor.^{1,2} They received an award at the Great Exhibition of 1851 (also known as the Crystal Palace Exhibition) for manufacturing machinery that could produce tens of thousands of hooks or needles per day. Their hooks

were sold internationally and especially in the United States. This wallet represents how a salesman for Milward would display their line of hook products.

The wallet is missing its closure. Measuring horizontally, it is 5 inches high, 9 inches wide, and 2 inches thick. The leather binding is a reddish brown with gold trimming. When unfolded, it is 75 inches long with twelve panels. Each panel is 5 inches wide and 9 inches long, separated by 2 inches of the leather binding. In addition, each panel has a large colored label with H. MILWARD & SONS, plus the hook information and a small white label with a hook designation number. Actual hooks are each assigned a number on the panel with hook-size designations and priced as described in the accompanying table with each wallet panel description.

Much of the history of Henry Milward and his sons is known. My object is to learn more about this wallet and the agency that distributed the Milward hooks throughout Maine and perhaps

the rest of New England. If you have any information or leads, please contact me at jerry.girard1@yahoo.com.



ENDNOTES

1. Todd E. A. Larson, *The History of the Fish Hook in America, Volume I: From Forge to Machine* (Cincinnati: The Whitefish Press, 2007), 2–5.

2. "Henry Milward and Sons," Grace's Guide to British Industrial History. www.gracesguide.co.uk/Henry_Milward_and_Sons. Accessed 12 December 2018. Grace's Guide is the leading source of historical information on industry and manufacturing in Britain. As of December 2018, this web publication contains 131,481 pages of information and 208,947 images on early companies, their products, and the people who designed and built them. Grace's Guide is a registered U.K. charity (no. 1154342) with the objective of preserving information about Britain's industrial past and making it available for others to freely enjoy.



The Milward Hook wallet, closed.



The Milward Hook wallet, inside flap, Maine Agency.

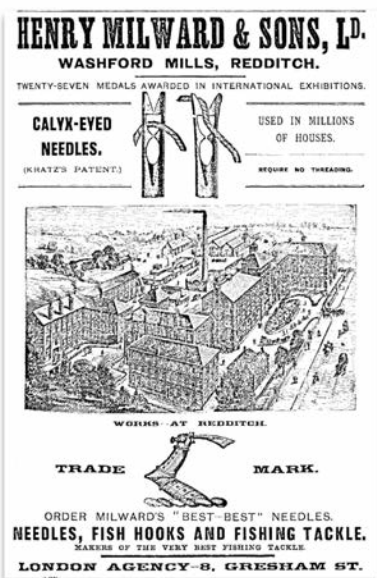


Panel 1 (blue)

Large hooks are stamped H. MILWARD & SONS. No hook-size designations listed (sizes were measured, not including the eye flat). White label: 5650%. Green label: H. MILWARD & SONS'/BEST STEEL/EXETER SEA/FISH HOOKS,/No. 00. Price per gross. Size: 1 (4½ inches), \$2.71; 2 (4 inches), \$2.09; 3 (3¾ inches), \$1.63; 4 (2½ inches, missing), \$1.35; 5 (2¼ inches, missing), \$1.00; 6 (2 inches), 73 cents; 7 (2¼ inches), 49 cents; 8 (2 inches), 49 cents.

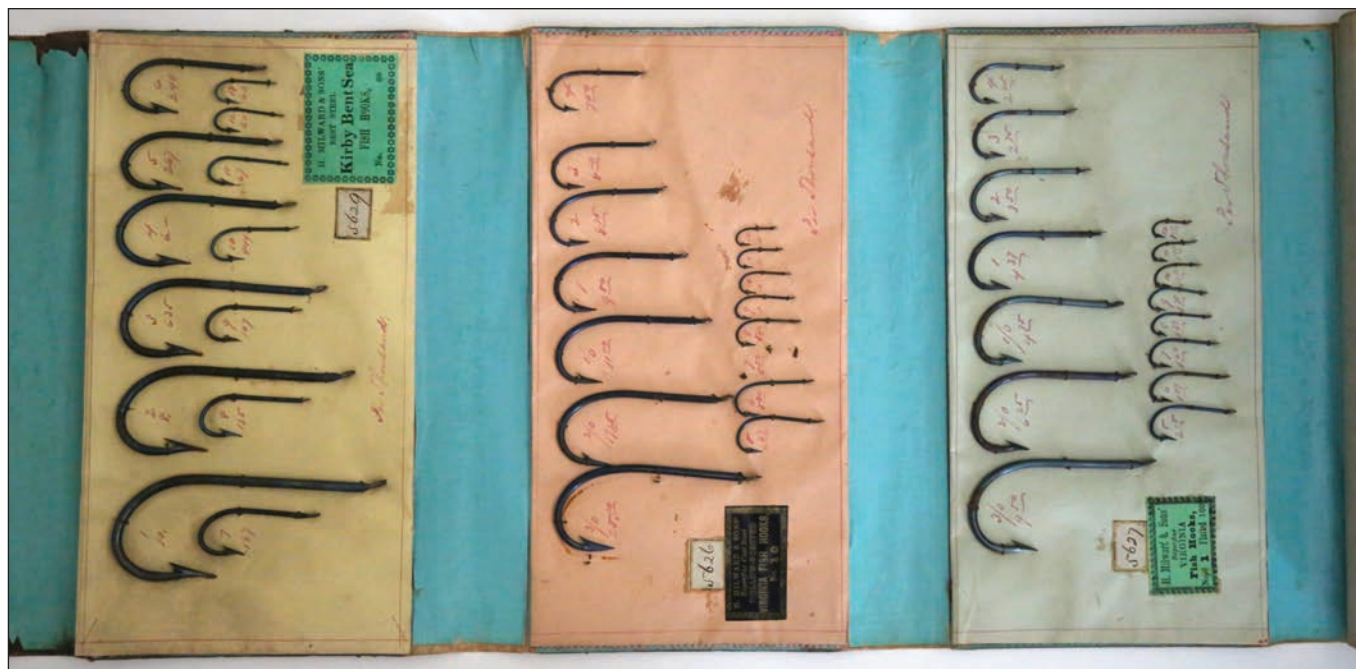
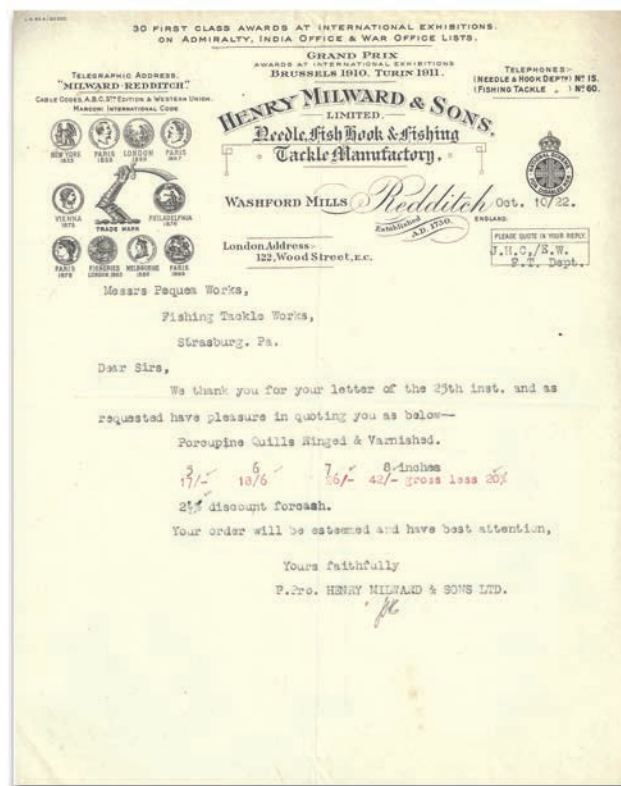
Panel 2 (pink)

No hook-size designations listed (sizes were measured, not including the eye flat). Price per thousand. White label: 5638. Green label: H. MILWARD & SONS'/BEST STEEL/Kirby Bent Sea/FISH HOOKS,/No. 00. Size: 1 (3½ inches), \$17.25; 2 (3 inches), \$13.75; 3 (2½ inches), \$11.00; 4 (2½ inches), \$7.75; 5 (2¼ inches), \$5.75; 6 (2 inches), \$4.37; 7 (1¾ inches), \$3.00; 8 (1½ inches), \$2.25; 9 (1¼ inches), \$1.75; 10 (1¼ inches), \$1.35; 11 (1¼ inches), \$1.07; 12 (1 inch), 94 cents; 13 (¾ inches), 75 cents.



An 1895 ad for Henry Milward & Sons. www.gracesguide.co.uk/File:Im1895POLon-Milward.jpg.

An example of the Henry Milward & Sons letterhead. In addition to its business information, address, and telephone numbers, it notes its thirty first-class awards and two grand prix awards at international exhibitions, its telegraphic address and various Marconi international codes, and its iron arm trademark (which possibly came from the family crest). On the right side is the symbol for the National Scheme for Disabled Men (or Ex-Servicemen, commonly known as the King's Roll); after World War I, British industries were asked to hire disabled veterans as 5 percent of their workforce. From the author's collection.



Panel 3 (light yellow)

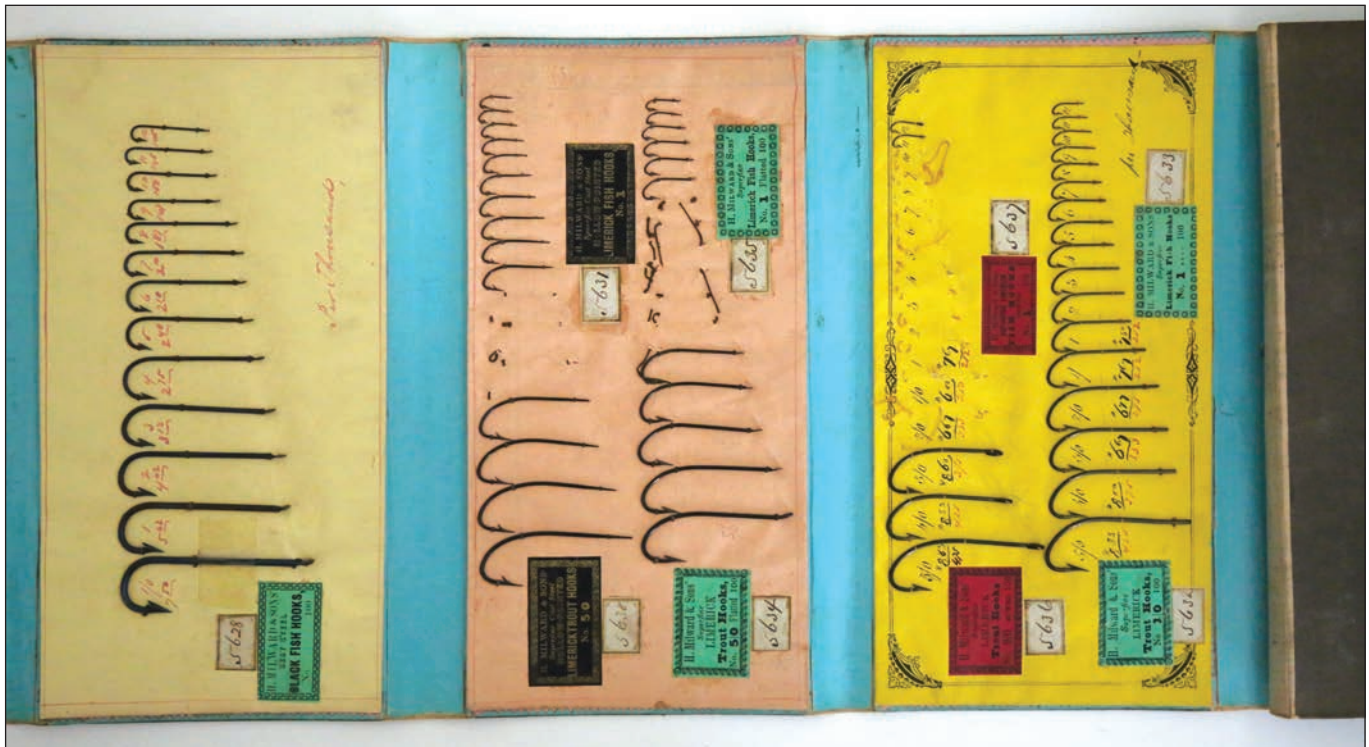
Hook-size designations listed. Price per thousand. White label: 5629. Green label: H. MILWARD & SONS'/BEST STEEL/Kirby Bent Sea/FISH HOOKS,/No. 00. Size: 1, \$10.00; 2, \$8.00; 3, \$6.35; 4, \$6.00; 5, \$2.67; 6, \$2.40; 7, \$1.87; 8, \$1.35; 9, \$1.07; 10, 84 cents; 11, 67 cents; 12, 60 cents; 13, 60 cents.

Panel 4 (pink)

Hook-size designations listed. Price per thousand. White label: 5626. Black label: H. MILWARD & SONS'/Superfine Cast Steel/HOLLOW POINTED/VIRGINIA FISH HOOKS,/No. 10. Size: 3/0, \$25.00; 2/0, \$17.25; 1/0, 11.00; 1, \$9.00; 2, \$8.75; 3, \$8.00; 4, \$7.50; 5, \$6.67; 6, \$5.84; 7, \$5.50; 8, \$5.42; 9, \$5.42; 10, \$5.42; 11, \$5.42; 12, \$5.42.

Panel 5 (blue)

Hook-size designations listed. Price per thousand. White label: 5627. Green label: H. Milward & Sons'/Superfine/VIRGINIA/FISH HOOKS,/No. 1/Flatted 100. Size: 3/0, \$9.50; 2/0, 6.25; 1/0, \$4.75; 1, \$4.37; 2, \$3.50; 3, \$2.75; 4, 2.25; 5, \$2.15; 6, \$1.87; 7, \$1.60; 8, \$1.39; 9, \$1.30; 10, \$1.10; 11, \$1.10; 12, \$1.10.



Panel 6 (light yellow)

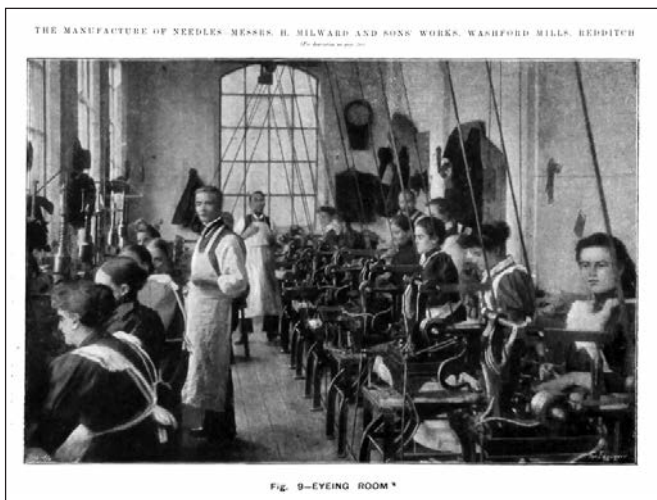
Hook-size designations listed. Price per thousand. White label: 5628. Green label: H. MILWARD & SONS'/BEST STEEL/ BLACK FISH HOOKS,/No. 100. Size: 1/0, \$7.50; 1, \$5.62; 2, \$4.62; 3, \$3.12; 4, \$2.75; 5, \$2.40; 6, \$2.10; 7, \$2.00; 8, \$1.87; 9, \$1.67; 10, \$1.50; 11, \$1.45; 12, \$1.45.

Panel 7 (pink)

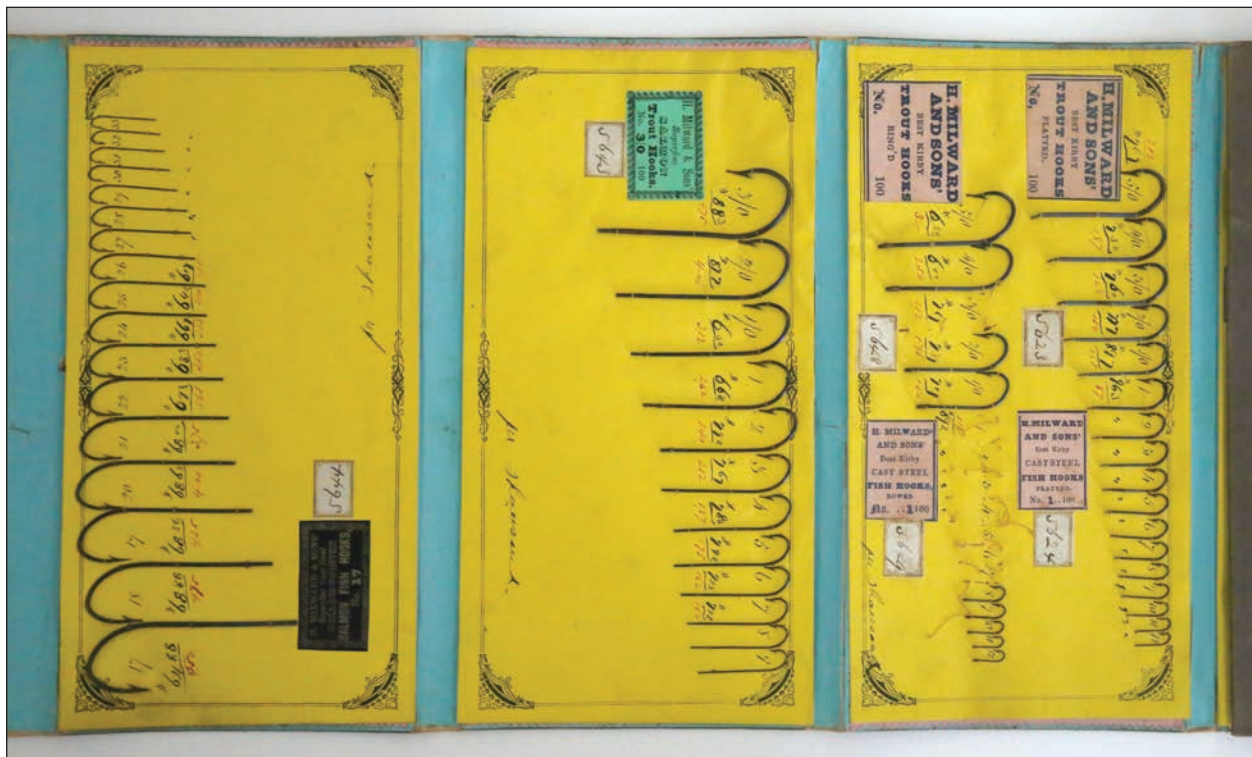
Upper left label: Hook-size designations listed. Price per thousand. White label: 5630. Black label: H. MILWARD & SONS'/ Superfine Cast Steel/HOLLOW POINTED/ LIMERICK TROUT HOOKS/No. 5/0. Upper right label: White label: 5631. Black label: H. MILWARD & SONS'/Superfine Cast Steel/ HOLLOW POINTED/LIMERICK FISH HOOKS/ No. 1. Ten hooks. No hook prices. Three hooks missing between white labels 5630 and 5631. Lower left label: White label: 5634. Green label: H. MILWARD & SONS'/ Superfine/LIMERICK/Trout Hooks/No. 5/0 Flatted 100. Five hooks. No hook prices. Lower right label: White label: 5635. Green label: H. MILWARD & SONS'/Superfine/ Limerick Fish Hooks,/No. 1 Flatted 100. Six hooks; six hooks missing. No hook prices.

Panel 8 (yellow)

Hook-size designations listed. Price per thousand. Upper left label: White label: 5636. Red label: H. Milward & Sons'/ Superfine/LIMERICK/Trout Hooks/No. 9/0 bowed 100. Size: 5/0, #883, \$4.75; 4/0, #833, \$4.25; 3/0, #860, \$3.75. Missing: 2/0, #667, \$3.33; 1/0, #600, \$2.50. Upper right label: White label: 5637. Red label: H. MILWARD & SONS'/SUPERFINE LIMERICK/ FISH HOOKS/BOWED/No. 1 100. Size: 1, #767, \$2.12. Missing: hooks 1-10. No prices for hooks 2-12. Lower left label: White label: 5632. Green label: H. Milward & Sons'/Superfine/LIMERICK/ Trout Hooks,/No. 1/0 100. Size: 5/0, #883, \$4.25; 4/0, #800, \$3.75; 3/0, #667, \$3.33; 2/0, #677, \$2.75; 1/0, #767, \$2.12; 1, #750, \$2.12. Lower right label: White label: 5633. Green label: H. MILWARD & SONS'/Superfine/Limerick Fish Hooks/ No. 1 100. Size: 2-12, no prices.



The manufacture of needles: eyeing room, Milward & Sons, 1898. www.gracesguide.co.uk/images/2/2c/1m1898EnV85-p299c.jpg.



Panel 9 (yellow)

Hook-size designations listed. Price per thousand. White label: 5644. Black label: H. MILWARD & SONS'/Superfine Cast Steel/HOLLOW POINTED/SALMON FISH HOOKS/No. 17. Size: 17, #6488, \$5.50; 18, #6888, \$4.75; 19, #6836, \$4.25; 20, #6868, \$4.00; 21, #6800, \$3.75; 22, #691, \$3.65; 23, #683, \$3.50; 24, #667, \$3.33; 25, #643, \$3.00; 26, #617, \$2.75; 27-33, no prices.

Panel 10 (yellow)

Hook-size designations listed. Price per thousand. White label: 5643. Green label: H. Milward & Sons'/Superfine/SALMON/Trout Hooks,/No. 3/0 100. Size: 3/0, #883, \$4.75; 2/0, #877, \$4.00; 1/0, #650, \$3.12; 1, #668, \$2.62; 2, #790, \$2.40; 3, #767, \$2.12; 4, #786, \$1.87; 5, #742, \$1.75; 6, #728, \$1.62; 7, #722, \$1.50; 8, 9, no descriptions.

Panel 11 (yellow)

Hook-size designations listed. Price per thousand. Upper left label: White label: 5623. Pink label: H. MILWARD & SONS'/BEST KIRBY/TROUT HOOKS/FLATTED./No. 100. Size: 5/0, #761, \$2.12; 4/0, #750, \$1.87; 3/0, #760, \$1.63; 2/0, #777, \$1.50; 1/0, #897, \$1.25; 1, #965, 87 cents; 2-12, no descriptions, 87 cents. Lower left label: White label: 5648. Pink label: H. MILWARD & SONS'/BEST KIRBY/TROUT HOOKS/RING'D/No. 100. Size: 5/0, #633, \$3.00; 4/0, #600, \$2.50; 3/0, #761, \$2.12; 2/0, #739, \$1.75; 1/0, #711, \$1.50. Lower right label: White label: 5649. Pink label: H. MILWARD & SONS'/Best Kirby/CAST STEEL/FISH HOOKS,/BOWED./No. 1, 100. Size: 1-7 missing (1, #892, \$1.15; 2-7, no descriptions); 8-12, no descriptions. Upper right label: White label: 5624. Pink label: H. MILWARD & SONS'/Best Kirby/CAST STEEL/FISH HOOKS/FLATTED./No. 1, 100. Size: 2-12, no prices.



Panel 12 (yellow)

Hook-size designations listed. Price per gross. White label: 5646. Yellow label: H. MILWARD & SONS'/BEST STEEL/Round Bent/double pike hooks/No. 1 Gross. Left side: Size (bottom to top): 16, #750, \$1.87; 17, #728, \$1.62; 18, #708, \$1.37; 19, #700, \$1.25. Right side: Size (top to bottom): 20, #692, \$1.25; 21, #683 1/4, \$1.12; 22, #686 1/4, \$1.06; 23, #783 1/4, \$1.06; 24, no number, \$1.00.

Museum News




John Mundt accepts the 2017 Austin Hogan award from Jim Heckman at the Anglers' Club.

John Mundt Receives 2017 Austin Hogan Award at the Anglers' Club of New York

John Mundt, former AMFF trustee and Anglers' Club president, was honored as an outstanding contributor to the *American Fly Fisher* with the museum's 2017 Austin Hogan Award. The award was established in 1985 to honor the memory of Austin Hogan, who founded the museum's journal in 1974.

Since 1991, Mundt has written nearly thirty pieces for the journal, including features, book reviews, and a memorial piece. About ten years ago, he suggested writing the occasional column that would profile people who are keeping classic aspects of the sporting life alive, people working in vastly varied arenas: artists, rod builders, taxidermists, bookbinders. He called the column Keepers of the Flame, and at last count, he's written fifteen of these—most recently an extended piece on the Boy Scouts of America.

Mundt was presented with the award on September 20, surrounded by friends old and new at the ever-welcoming Anglers' Club of New York. AMFF Trustee Richard Tisch served as the evening's congenial host. With opening remarks from President Karen Kaplan, award presentation by AMFF Trustee/Journal Committee Chair Jim Heckman, and a lively auction with Heritage Auction's Nick Dawes at the helm, the evening was full of warmth and camaraderie. Deputy Director Yoshi Akiyama was on hand with a few special items from the collection, artfully displayed to be enjoyed up close. The museum's historic vises, Halford manuscript, and fishing vest of HRH Prince Charles (procured by Mundt himself) were right at home among the storied items nestled in the hallowed shelves of the Anglers' Club.

Remembering Jim Carey

We were saddened to learn of the passing of former trustee James H. Carey, who died 23 October 2018 at the age of eighty-six. Jim, who served on the board as treasurer from 1996 to 2002, spent his career in senior banking positions—including president, vice president, and CEO—at Chase Manhattan Bank, GFTA Services Corp., Briarcliff Financial Associates, Berkshire Bank, and National Capital Benefits Corp.; he was also a director of Airborne Inc. from 1978 to 2003 and, following its merger with DHL, chairman of the board from 2004 to 2014.

He served on the boards of directors of multiple organizations, both financial and charitable. He was particularly devoted to his work with UNICEF.

By the time he joined our board, Jim and his wife had settled here in Manchester, Vermont. Because he was a local resident, staff got to know him; when Jim dropped by, it brightened our day. As former board president Richard Tisch aptly described him, Jim was “an affable, calm man with excellent judgment and an engaging sense of humor.”

Jim joined the board soon after Richard was elected. Richard claims that Jim “helped me as much if not more than any other trustee during my years as president, offering sound advice on financial and policy issues.” He adds a personal story: “At one time, when I was uncertain as to how to decide a contentious issue, he offered me advice that stuck: ‘You’re the president now, not a lawyer giving advice. Make the decision.’”

We will decidedly miss Jim Carey.



Jim Carey with Pamela Bates Richards at a museum gathering in October 1998.



Deputy Director Yoshi Akiyama, AMFF Member Larry Bruce, and HMH Vis owner Jonathan Larrabee explored a recent museum acquisition of historic vises developed by Bill Hunter at our November members-only event, AMFF Confidential: Behind the Scenes at the Museum.

Recent Donations to the Collection

Robert Miller of Oro Valley, Arizona, donated eight framed flies tied by René and Bonnie Harrop titled *Favorite Flies*; a House of Harrop catalog, Vol. II (1995); a Wheatley fly box with fifty-four wet flies; a box of twenty flies tied by Ed Shenk; and a box of ninety-one flies tied by René Harrop.

Robert Sheldon of Westport, Connecticut, sent us a Billingshurst side-mounted fly reel patented in 1859. **Charles A. Woods**, MD, of Weston, Vermont, gave us two containers of fly-tying materials and a collection of ten books (for a detailed book listing, contact the museum).

Michael Hackney of Groton, Massachusetts, sent us *Patterns* by John Betts (Reel Lines Press, 2018). **Ray Bondorew** of Coventry, Rhode Island, donated a copy of his book, *Stripers and Streamers: Successful Flies, Techniques and Other Insights* (Frank Amato Publications, 1996).

Harley Bartlett of Hope, Rhode Island, donated one of his original oil paintings, *Brookie Pursuit*. And **Foster Bam** of Greenwich, Connecticut, gave us a decorative painting (acrylic on board) by Yoshi Akiyama created for AMFF's fiftieth anniversary.



On September 15, we hosted our Canvas and Cocktails event with Deputy Director Yoshi Akiyama as featured artist. With red and white wine available for inspiration, participants—half of whom had never painted before—worked on a scenic landscape of mountains, trees, and a stream. Yoshi's combination of talent, sense of humor, and ability to teach makes him a popular instructor for this event. Everyone left happy with their paintings.



AMFF's 2018 Volunteer of the Year Bill Cosgrove received his well-deserved award from Executive Director Sarah Foster at our annual trustee dinner on October 20. Those who have been to our Fly-Fishing Festival will surely recognize Bill. Each year he helps with setting up tables, chairs, and tents, manning booths, and anything else we need on the spur of the moment. We appreciate his dedication, support, and most of all, the positive energy he always brings to the grounds of AMFF.

Upcoming Events

Events take place on the museum grounds in Manchester, Vermont, unless otherwise noted.

February 9

Tie One On & Iron Fly Contest
2:00 p.m.—8:00 p.m.

March 9 and 23

Frequent Fly Tier: Fly-Tying Instruction
10:00 a.m.—noon

July (Thursdays)

Kids Clinics
10:00 a.m.—11:00 a.m.

August 10

12th Annual Fly-Fishing Festival
10:00 a.m.—4:00 p.m.

Always check our website (www.amff.org) for additions, updates, and more information or contact (802) 362-3300 or amff@amff.org. The museum's e-mail newsletter offers up-to-date news and event information. To subscribe, look for the link on our website or contact the museum.

CONTRIBUTORS

Jerry Girard, a retired research chemist formerly in the pharmaceutical industry, started fly fishing thirty-five-plus years ago and rapidly developed his interest in fly-fishing history after meeting Chip Stauffer, an angling companion of James Leisenring, Preston Jennings, and Art Flick. Through his pursuit of angling history—focused mainly on rods and rod makers—he has acquired an extensive library and collection of historically significant pre-1900 rods, reels, catalogs, and angling ephemera. He is a dealer in angling collectibles; attends most East Coast fishing collectible shows; and owns Historical Angling Artifacts, a hobby business specializing in historical tackle and angling papers.

Girard wrote feature articles of historical interest in the *Art of Angling Journal*, as well as a column on collecting; he was also a regular contributor to the Catskill Fly Fishing Center's *Castabout*. With Robert D. Stewart, he co-authored the book *F. E. Thomas: The Man and His Rods* (2015). "Thaddeus Norris: America's Izaak Walton" was published in this journal in Spring 2003.

Girard is a member of the American Museum of Fly Fishing, served on the board of trustees of the Catskill Fly Fishing Center, and is on the board of directors of the Pennsylvania Fly Fishing Museum. He has fished the streams of New Jersey, Pennsylvania, New York, Maine, Montana, Utah, New Mexico, Oregon, Alaska, Canada, and Poland. Fly fishing small streams is a passion, and he pursues it as often as possible. He resides in Bensalem, Pennsylvania.



Chris Bogart



Barbara Herd, MD, FRCP

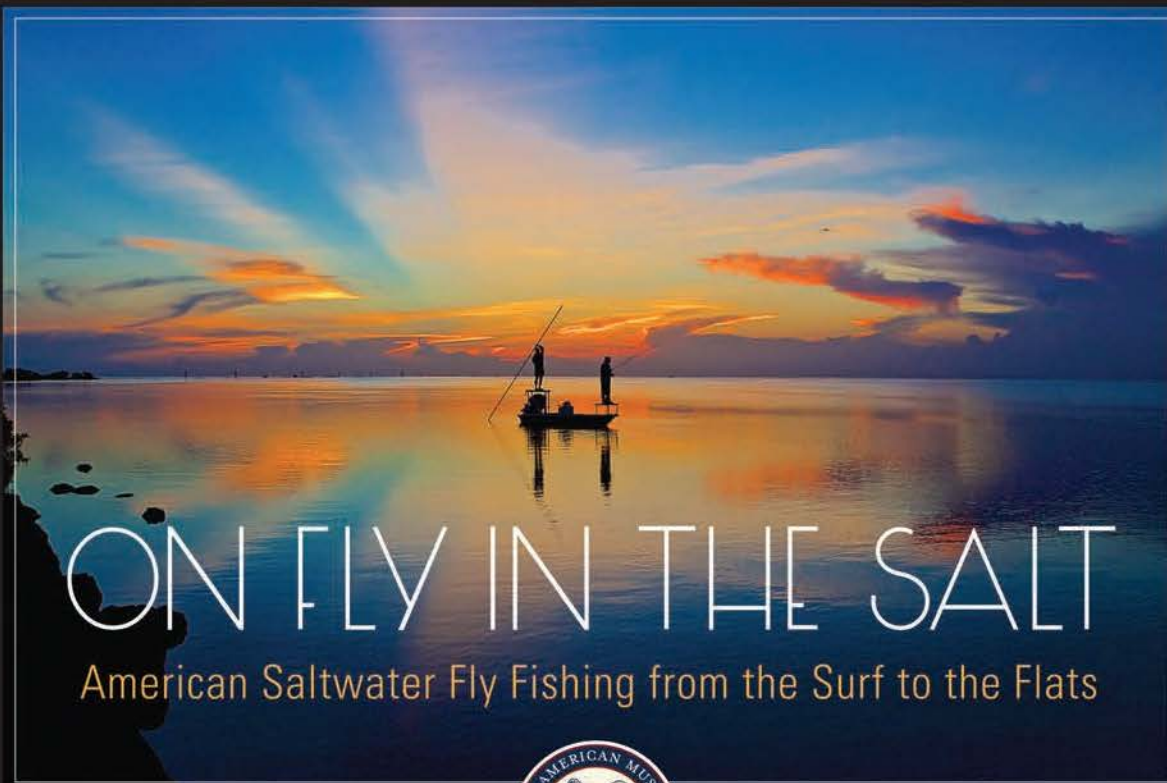
Andrew Herd trained to become a fishing bum, but made a mess of his career path and had to become a physician instead, qualifying at the Middlesex Hospital, London, in 1982 at the age of twenty-two. After a varied career in medicine, which included a spell as the McIndoe Research Fellow at the Queen Victoria Hospital, East Grinstead, he took one of the best decisions he ever made, which was to marry Dr. Barbara Holder and settle in County Durham, where he was a family practitioner until his retirement.

Herd has published many books, including his *History of Fly Fishing* trilogy (available from the Medlar Press), and was the executive editor of *Waterlog* magazine. His most recently published work is the Blacker trilogy, a detailed and profusely illustrated account of William Blacker's life and times, written with Dr. Hermann Dietrich-Troeltsch and Alberto Calzolari. He is currently working on *The Flyfishers*, a history of the Flyfishers' Club of London, and on *Fishing for the North Country*, both of which will be published by the Medlar Press in 2019.

Currently scholar-in-residence at the Montana State University Library, **Paul Schullery** was the first executive director of the American Museum of Fly Fishing, from 1977 to 1982. He is the recipient of numerous awards for his work as a writer and conservationist, including honorary doctorates from Ohio University (2013) and Montana State University (1997); the Wallace Stegner Award from the University of Colorado Center of the American West (1999); a Panda award for scriptwriting from Wildscreen International for the PBS film *The Living Edens: Yellowstone* (2002), which he wrote and narrated; and induction into the Fly Fishing Hall of Fame (2014). The author, co-author, or editor of some four dozen books, Schullery's recent titles include a fly-fishing memoir, *The Fishing Life*; the Yellowstone historical monograph *Nature and Culture at Fishing Bridge*; and the novels *The Time Traveler's Tale* and *Diamond Jubilee*. He is married to the artist Marsha Karle, with whom he has collaborated as author and artist on seven books.



Marsha Karle



A New Exhibit Presented by the American Museum of Fly Fishing

National Sporting Library and Museum

Middleburg, VA

October 12, 2018 – March 3, 2019

Yale Peabody Museum of Natural History

New Haven, CT

April 6, 2019 – October 13, 2019

Florida Keys History and Discovery Center

Islamorada, FL

November 10, 2019 – February 29, 2020

amff.org

Photo Courtesy of Pat Ford

Living through History

Sara Wilcox



Visitors to the saltwater exhibition have the opportunity to watch our video interviews with nine pioneers of the sport on a dedicated tablet computer.

OUR EXHIBITIONS ARE often a result of further exploring a given topic, individual, or occasion. This holds true for the recently launched *On Fly in the Salt: American Saltwater Fly Fishing from the Surf to the Flats*. In 2010, the board of trustees decided that the history and evolution of saltwater fly fishing was a niche that needed to be represented—not necessarily because it had the potential to make a splashy exhibition, but because it's an area that needs more research, documentation, and dissemination.

As a small museum, we find ourselves trying to keep up with the daily tasks of collection management, journal production, fund-raising, public and community programs, and research requests. But we also carve out time to set priorities and make plans to actively immerse ourselves in the living history of fly fishing. The people, places, and stories that are here today are not guaranteed tomorrow, and we recognize our role as the steward of the history, traditions, and practices of our sport.

It is our responsibility not only to collect and preserve artifacts, but to also capture the spirit and the soul of fly fishing. As part of the saltwater project, we interviewed nine pioneers: Stu Apte, Nick Curcione, Bill Curtis, Chico Fernandez, Lefty Kreh, Flip Pallot, Nat Ragland, Mark Sosin, and Joan Wulff. Their words, their voices, and their personalities are a wonderful

component to the traveling exhibition, but are also permanently archived at the American Museum of Fly Fishing. As we continue to carry out our mission, we want to capture the spirit of individuals shaping the sport—not just their flies, rods, and reels, but also their stories.

If you didn't have a chance to experience *On Fly in the Salt* while it was on view at the museum last summer, perhaps you'll be able to catch it at one of the following venues:

- National Sporting Library and Museum, Middleburg, Virginia (until 3 March 2019)
- Yale Peabody Museum of Natural History, New Haven, Connecticut (6 May 2019–13 October 2019)
- Florida Keys History and Discovery Center, Islamorada, Florida (10 November 2019–29 February 2020)

The history of fly fishing has a safe home at the American Museum of Fly Fishing. We are proud to be a national museum, a community museum, and your museum.

SARAH FOSTER
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



Catch and Release the Spirit of Fly Fishing!

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MISSION

THE AMERICAN MUSEUM OF FLY FISHING is the steward of the history, traditions, and practices of the sport of fly fishing and promotes the conservation of its waters. The museum collects, preserves, exhibits, studies, and interprets the artifacts, art, and literature of the sport and, through a variety of outreach platforms, uses these resources to engage, educate, and benefit all.

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 amff@amff.org 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 Samantha Pitcher at spitcher@amff.org to tell us how we would benefit from your skills and talents.

SUPPORT

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

JOIN

Membership Dues (per annum)

Patron	\$1,000
Sustainer	\$500
Contributor	\$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 Samantha Pitcher at spitcher@amff.org.

We welcome contributions to the *American Fly Fisher*. Before making a submission, please review our Contributor's Guidelines on our website (www.amff.org), or write to request a copy. The museum cannot accept responsibility for statements and interpretations that are wholly the author's.



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