The American Fly Fisher

Journal of the American Museum of Fly Fishing

SPRING 2011 VOLUME 37 NUMBER 2

Vernal Thanksgiving

F. W. Benson, Tihonet Club logbook 1928.
From the collection of the American Museum of Fly Fishing.

When the last of the snow melts away, when the temperatures begin to rise, when the trout in the streams begin to stir, most of us are ready and thankful for the spring warming. At the museum, we rejoice not only at our hemisphere's tilt back toward the sun, but also at the support we've experienced during the preceding year. In this spring issue, we give thanks for all of you: our donors, sponsors, supporters, volunteers, authors, lenders, and friends (page 26).

We offer special thanks to Trustee Gardner L. Grant, who, after thirty-six years of dedicated service, becomes Trustee Emeritus Gardner L. Grant. At the 2010 annual membership meeting, we named our library in his honor (see inside back cover).

Sometimes being a small museum means being thankful for opportunities to work with other small museums. In this issue's Gallery (page 21), Executive Director Cathi Comar reports on a collaboration between our museum and the President Calvin Coolidge State Historic Site in Plymouth Notch, Vermont, which contacted us for help with cataloguing the donation of a crate full of Coolidge's fly-fishing equipment. It has been an exciting project for both organizations.

As editor of this journal, I'm thankful for my authors and their insights into the history, art, and literature of the sport. We have a little bit of all of that in this issue. Come, take a look.

Mottisfont—the Hampshire, England, estate on the west bank of a middle portion of the River Test—has been host to many angling greats. Frederic M. Halford himself leased fishing rights on this chalk stream from 1905 until 1914. In "Frederic M. Halford at Mottisfont on the River Test," G. William Fowler tells us about the estate itself, the importance and near-holy status of this river, and both Halford's fishing and his river improvement projects during his tenure as lessee. This article begins on page 2.

In 2006, the Tihonet Club (Wareham, Massachusetts) donated its annual logbooks—along with art, books, and maps—to the American Museum of Fly Fishing. The artist Frank W. Benson was a member of the Tihonet Club, and his beautifully illustrated notes grace the pages of these logs. In "Frank W. Benson: Artist and Angler" (page 14), Gerald Karaska offers up the sporting side to Benson's history and highlights some of the pages in the logs now housed at the museum.

John Mundt, in Keepers of the Flame, has also chosen to profile an artist: the sporting artist and museum member C. D. Clarke. Mundt caught up with Clarke on a small trout stream in rural Connecticut, but by happy coincidence, the piece's accompanying photo shows Clarke painting on the banks of the River Test (we also get a peek at the watercolor he was painting at that moment). "C. D. Clarke: Professional Sporting Artist" can be found on page 20.

In Notes from the Library (page 23), Gerald Karaska reviews his friend and colleague William G. Tapply's posthumously published book of fishing essays, *Every Day Was Special* (Skyhorse Publishing). Museum News (page 24) highlights our winter holiday season and upcoming events.

At last, it's spring. And hey—thanks for reading.

Kathleen Achor
Editor

Our Mission:

The American Museum of Fly Fishing promotes an understanding of and appreciation for the history, traditions, and practitioners of the sport of fly fishing. It collects, preserves, exhibits, studies, and interprets the artifacts, art, and literature of the sport and uses these resources to engage and benefit everyone.

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ON THE COVER: *Frederic M. Halford and William Senior sitting on the bank of an English chalk stream, c. early twentieth century. Courtesy of the Flyfishers' Club, London, with permission.*

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Frederic M. Halford at Mottisfont on the River Test

by G. William Fowler

The Cattle Bridge and the River Test at Mottisfont (plate 7), early twentieth century. With permission from the Hampshire Record Office. Reference number 142M98-3.

The Mottisfont estate is located in Hampshire, England, south of an old Roman road that once connected Winchester to Salisbury.[1] Nestled on the west bank of a middle portion of the River Test and downstream of the famous fishing beats of the Houghton Fishing Club, Mottisfont is one of those quiet, beautiful places steeped in folklore and fly-fishing history as a result of so many angling greats having fished its waters. Frederic M. Halford leased the fishing rights on the estate's chalk stream from 1905 until his death in 1914.

A study of Halford at Mottisfont is relevant to the American angler, as it was Halford's first two books that gave Theodore Gordon the dry-fly fever. In November 1891, Halford sent Gordon two large sheets of all the artificial flies he thought advisable for use in America.[2] This transmittal has earned Halford the honor of being identified as the father of dry-fly fishing in America.[3] Although Halford is widely known as the "symbolic father of the modern dry fly,"[4] his angling life was also devoted to codifying chalk-stream management practices, which are increasingly important to the American angler because understanding early English practices provides a historical foundation for current American stream management.

Historical Ownership of Mottisfont

The Mottisfont estate was owned by William the Conqueror in the eleventh century. William Briwere (Brewer) established the priory of Austin Canons there, which was congregated in 1224. It developed into a religious community with the distinction of having the forefinger of John the Baptist as one of its relics; the finger that, according to legend, pointed to Jesus Christ when he said "the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world."[5]

During the reign of Henry VIII, the monasteries were dissolved as part of the Reformation. Thomas Cromwell and the Tudor government terminated the religious ownership of vast tracts of land, which was the greatest change in land ownership since the Norman conquest.[6] Fifteen monasteries in Hampshire lost their property; among these were the Augustinians of Mottisfont Abbey. The properties were granted or sold to influential members of the royal court and government officials.

Sir William Sandys, the king's lord chancellor, became the new owner of Mottisfont in 1536. It was important to the king that reliable and loyal people such as Sir Sandys control the Hampshire lands and provide leadership should the vulnerable coastal county be invaded from the sea.[7] A succession of descendants of Lord Sandys owned the estate by inheritance for four centuries until 1934, when Gilbert Russell bought the property from the Barker-Mills family. After Russell acquired the estate, substantial improvements occurred on the property, and gardens were established around the estate. Garden designer Norah Lindsay and landscape architect Sir Geoffrey Jellicoe introduced more color and structure to the existing open lawns and informal stands of trees, making Mottisfont a showplace. Russell kept the property until 1957, when he donated it to the National Trust, which continues to operate the estate today. The National Trust recognized the need to preserve England's nineteenth-century French roses, and Graham Stuart Thomas, garden advisor to the British National Trust, assembled them at Mottisfont, further adding to the importance of the estate today.[8]

The River Test

The English chalk streams of Hampshire have long been some of the finest trout rivers in the world. In 1653, Izaak

The River Test. From Charles Bingham, Chalk Stream Salmon and Trout Fishing *(Shrewsbury, U.K.: Swan Hill Press, 1993), 8. Used with permission.*

Walton said that the Hampshire chalk stream "exceeds all England for swift, shallow, clear, pleasant brooks and store of trouts."[9] Nearly all of the world's chalk streams are in England.[10] Sir Edward Grey of Fallodon has eloquently described the Hampshire chalk stream in Halford's time:

> Other rivers may shrink and leave their banks dry, but the Hampshire chalk streams run brim full, and their valleys are full of water meadows, intersected by streams and runnels and channels and cuts of all sorts and sizes carrying over the land the bounty of water . . .
>
> A true chalk stream has few tributaries. The valleys on the higher ground near it have no streams; the rain falls upon the great expanse of high exposed downs, and sinks silently into the chalk, till somewhere in a large low valley it rises in constant springs, and a full river starts from them towards the sea. There is always something mysterious to me in looking at these rivers, so little affected by the weather of the moment, fed continually by secret springs, flowing with a sort of swiftness, but for the most part (except close to mills and large hatches) silently, and with water which looks too pure and clear for that of a river of common life.[11]

English author Harold Russell said, "Taking the trout streams of Great Britain from end to end, the most delightful sport, the most interesting fishing, and the greatest variety of happiness can probably be got on the Hampshire chalk streams. Of these I think the queen of rivers is the Test."[12]

The Test is an idyllic river dear to the hearts of fly fishers throughout the world and considered the holiest of waters by many. An old English saying goes, "God couldn't get a day on the Test."[13] In a farm meadow near Ashe, the Test is born from a spring flowing south over the chalk down. The Test is approximately 40 miles long from its beginnings until it flows into the sea at South Hampton.[14] As it makes its way south to the English Channel, the Test flows through many communities identified with the history of trout fishing, including Overton, Whitechurch, Hurstbourne Priors, Newton Stacey, Chilbolton, Stockbridge, Bossington, Mottisfont, Romsey, and the Broadlands. Because of its length, the Test's tributaries include the rivers Bourne, Anton, Dever, Dun, and Blackwater and Wallop Brook, which are important chalk streams in their own right. The Test does not always have a single channel or riverbed. In places, the river has a braided appearance, as side streams begin and return to the main river. Over the last eight centuries, as a result of man's needs for water power and irrigated land, many streams or irrigation carriers have been built along the Test.

The Test Valley near Laverstoke is the background for Richard Adams's novel *Watership Down.* It's a foreign place to Americans in many respects. The language is different. It's a place where eel pots and baskets, mill races, carriers, irrigation tunnels or bunnies, sluices, stews, and water meadows abound—a place where, Halford said, "sport and profit cannot be united in one undertaking without destroying, or at best crippling the other."[15] John Waller Hills described the main River Test at Mottisfont as "rather heavy water, but bringing up good hatches of olives and pale wateries, and also of the famous Oakley Stream, narrower, quicker and more lively, a

English chalk stream. With permission from the National Trust, Mottisfont.

The Great Oak at Oakley Stream (Mottisfont), late nineteenth century. With permission from the Hampshire Record Office. Reference number 12M96/11.

Halford with Dick Coxon inspecting Oakley Stream banks during low water, c. 1907–1908. With permission from the National Trust, Mottisfont.

surer beat and a more interesting one."[16] Along Oakley Stream is a fishing hut sitting just a few yards from a thousand-year-old tree called the Great Oak.[17] Since 1905, the hut has been referred to as Halford's fishing hut, but originally it was named after Billacombe the builder.[18]

No one has described the beauty of fly fishing for trout on the Test more eloquently than John Waller Hills.

> Was there ever such a sport as fishing, or such a river as the Test? Going home, recalling incidents of the day, all seemed symbolic. The very mistakes and misfortunes had their place and their necessity. And from the back of the mind, unobserved during the intense drama of the sport but returning with the cessation of activity, there arose a deep consciousness of the beauty of the background against which the contest had been enacted. The ageless outline of the down, springing from a time far earlier than man and man's cultivation, the grass with its wealth of flowers, the song of birds, the glancing water—all this entered into the inner chamber of the soul, giving a refreshment, a poise, a balance and a new life to intellect and to emotions which no other experience could offer.[19]

Halford the Man

Frederic Michael Halford was born on 13 April 1844 in Spring Hill, Birmingham, the third child of five born to Samuel and Phoebe Hyam. His family was part of a very prominent ready-to-wear clothing manufacturing enterprise engaged in producing large volumes of shirts and other garments and selling them quickly at low margins. The Hyams' success was dependent on thousands of workers in several factories throughout England.[20] At age seven, Frederic attended University College School, and at age sixteen, he finished school to join the family business. Six years later, in 1866, he became an officer in the 36th Middlesex Volunteers, which required him to drill twenty-four times a year. In 1872, he married Florence St. Lokley, and their only child, Ernest, was born the same year. By 1875, Frederic had changed his surname to Halford,[21] and he was almost fully retired, serving only as a director of the family business. Martin Mosely was Halford's nephew, a leading entomologist of the time, and author of *Dry-Fly Fisherman's Entomology*.[22] On 15 April 1907, Halford was at Mottisfont when he learned that his wife, who was being treated for a nervous breakdown, had fallen from a hotel window in Crow-Button Sussex, an apparent suicide during temporary insanity.[23] This was a tremendous blow to him.

The year 1908 was a turning point for Halford. His own health improved as he overcame his depression from his wife's death.[24] Although his diary shows that he fished very little in April, he fished fifteen days in May, and he was at Mottisfont with friends for several days when he didn't fish at all.[25] Overall for the season, he caught ninety-two trout at Mottisfont, with eighty-six from Oakley Stream. He also caught twenty-six grayling.[26]

Halford's fishing experiences before becoming addicted to chalk streams were varied, including sea fishing and spinning for pike. Halford fished the Thames and caught a 12-pound trout. In 1868, at age twenty-four, he took up fly fishing with a beat on the Waddle.[27] He came to Hampshire in 1877 having joined a new syndicate of twenty-four members who had acquired the Houghton Club's fishing rights on the Test, which consisted of 9 miles of river frontage from Machine Barn down to Bossington.[28] His relationship with the Houghton waters ended in 1886 when the group lost their fishing rights and the original Houghton Club members regained possession.

Halford is credited with formalizing dry-fly fishing and writing down what had been discovered and developed.[29] He defined the art of dry-fly fishing. Although he was not known as an innovator, he still became a legend. John Waller Hills called Halford the historian of the dry fly, saying that Halford described what he did not invent, and by practice and writing made an "unanswerable case" for the dry-fly system.[30] Halford's books at first clarified techniques but later moved onto codification.[31] He wrote seven books, including

his autobiography.[32] His early books sold out quickly, both in England and America, and were first reprinted as "The Dry Fly Series" by William Senior, editor of *The Field*. Senior had some advice about reading Halford's works.

> [Y]ou must always read very carefully between the lines. You never know when you find a pearl. The apparently prosaic statement often contains a valuable lesson, and what seems to be a sentence merely recording the capture of a trout of given inches and ounces will be found to have been written with the object of sustaining an argument or enforcing a truth.[33]

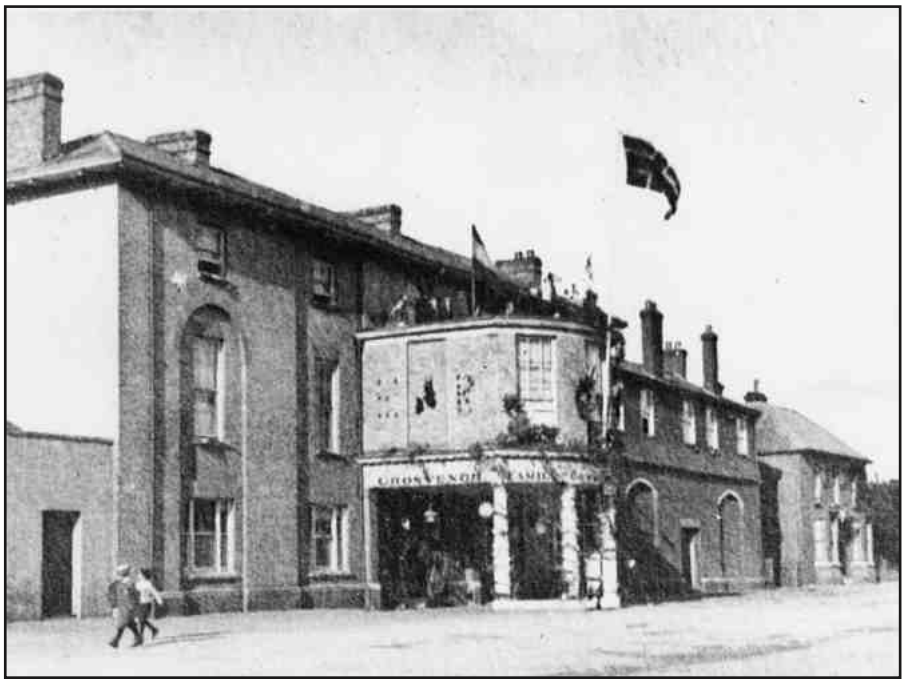
Halford published his last two books during the time he leased the Mottisfont waters. The most significant of the two was *Modern Development of the Dry Fly*, published in 1910. Here he listed thirty-three fly patterns that he deemed essential for every situation that could arise on a chalk stream. These patterns were a far cry from the ninety patterns that he and George S. Marryat believed essential for English chalk streams and listed in his first book, published in 1886, *Floating Flies & How to Dress Them*, or the one hundred best patterns in his book *Dry Fly Entomology*, published in 1897.[34]

He was a frequent contributor to *The Field* under the pseudonym "Detached Badger," writing more than 200 articles.[35] His dry-fly theories became so credible to anglers at the time that many considered it heresy to fish any other way. Today's Halford purists still practice his teachings and methods and follow his ethical code. His popularity was such that major English fly-fishing equipment manufacturers, such as Hardy Brothers and C. Farlow & Co., Ltd., capitalized on his name by reproducing his fly patterns and manufacturing fly rods, reels, and other equipment endorsed by him.

Halford at Oakley Stream with fly rod in hand, early twentieth century. Courtesy of the Flyfishers' Club, London, with permission.

The foundation of Halford's writings was his field notes, which he then converted into his diary. His fishing diaries consisted of three volumes, beginning on 2 April 1879 and ending with his last fishing day at Mottisfont on 24 October 1913.[36] Chalk-stream fishing was different, and he accepted the challenge by becoming knowledgeable about the river and its fish, vegetation, and insect life. His extensive studies with George S. Marryat prepared him to codify dry-fly fishing methods and enabled him to become an expert on the subject. Although these studies were called "scientific" at the time, Halford's works have been questioned because he did not have "an open mind and willingness to listen to others."[37] G. E. M. Skues was guilty of the same malady. T. E. Pryce-Tannatt's more humble view, enumerated in his famous book on dressing salmon flies, that your work should "be regarded as registering a phase in piscatorial history now receding into a dimming past," would have served Halford and Skues well.[38] Conrad Voss Bark points out that Halford's work was solely directed to achieving the perfect imitation of a natural insect; he never concerned himself with how the fly looked to the trout. Therefore, his detailed observations left him open for criticism in later years.[39] Many who contributed to the understanding about improvements to the dry fly came later, including Dr. J. C. Mottram, J. W. Dunne, and Vince Marinaro; significantly, John Goddard and Brian Clarke made the revelation of the "flaring" of the wings as the fly enters the trout's window of vision.[40]

Halford admits that in the beginning, he knew little about chalk streams, so for the first two years he didn't maintain any



Grosvenor Hotel, Stockbridge, home of the Houghton Club, early twentieth century. Courtesy of the Flyfishers' Club, London, with permission.

records in his diary of his fishing activities. The diaries contain twenty-eight years of detailed chalk-stream records: dates; wind and weather conditions; beats or locations fished; flies used, including their sex; the sex of trout caught; and a section with remarks about the day's fishing. Later he included a separate accounting of catches by others. Halford maintained statistical summaries of each year's fishing in the diaries. The remarks section contains the names of people he fished with, including G. S. Marryat, Francis Francis, William Senior, H. S. Hall, R. B. Marston, J. J. Hardy, and many other notable angling authorities of the time.[41] His fishing diaries are a fine example of scientific observations from self-study.[42] The "remarks" section provides additional details. For example, Halford was at Mottisfont with J. J. Hardy to test the new 1912 Hardy Bros. fly rod (which replaced the first "Halford" dry-fly rod introduced in 1905) and other equipment. Halford and Hardy fished for three consecutive days.[43] Halford told Mr. Hardy that "it is to my mind the best fly rod I ever handled."[44]

Halford's last day of fishing was at Mottisfont on 23 August 1913. His last fish was a 1-pound, 2-ounce rainbow trout.[45] He vacationed during the winter of 1914 in Tunisia; on his return trip to England, he caught pneumonia and died aboard ship 5 March 1914 as it came into Tilbury Docks on the Thames.[46]

Early Visits

Halford fished Mottisfont many times before acquiring the fishing rights for himself in 1905. His first recorded visit to Mottisfont was on 1 June 1882, as noted in his fishing diary. He described the wind as "blowing a gale" out of the northeast, and he recorded catching three trout for the day, with the largest weighing 3 pounds, 8 ounces on a Silver Sedge.[47]

On 2 June 1884, Halford returned, and with the wind out of the southeast, he caught three trout weighing a total of 5 pounds, 1 ounce. One fish weighed 1 pound, 14 ounces; another weighed 1 pound, 12 ounces; and each was caught on a Grey Drake. The smallest weighed 1 pound, 7 ounces, and was caught on an Artful Dodger. Halford recorded losing two other fish, one rising and rolling over several times. He also noted that there was a fair showing of the mayfly, but the fish were not taking well.[48] Tony Hayter reports that Halford never caught any of the really large Test trout, but that June day at Mottisfont may have been the day that Halford encountered the largest chalk-stream trout of his career. He was fishing with Major Anthony Carlisle and Major William Greer Turle when he made a stout cast with a straw-bodied Champion Mayfly. Halford described the encounter as follows:

> Almost close to the bank, in the head of a tremendous race, I espied a fish taking down with a gulp every passing Mayfly. Crouching down well below him, and in absolute ignorance of the place, I put the fly over the spot; a quick splashing rise, and with a heavy swirl, the hooked fish ploughed diagonally across the stream; but, before he had traveled ten yards, the point of my rod came back, and I found about three strands left of a 2½ yd. cast. The gut had parted fairly in the middle of a length, and had the appearance of being cut with a knife. Looking down in the water, I noted a primeval forest of ribbon weed, the edges of which I know to my cost are often as sharp as a razor. I never was so utterly and hopelessly smashed before, especially with gut such as is seldom used on the Test—stout enough to kill a grilse or even a 20 lb. salmon at a pinch. Talking the matter over later in the day with the keeper, he said, "Oh! Yes, sir, I knows he well—he's be nigh on 6 lb. or 7 lb."; and really I do not think this was an exaggeration.[49]

Right: Halford angling on the main channel of the Test, early twentieth century. Courtesy of the Flyfishers' Club, London, with permission.

Below: Halford and William Senior quietly observing and waiting for the rise on an English chalk stream. Courtesy of the Flyfishers' Club, London, with permission.

Roadway bridge over chalk stream, early twentieth century. Anglers were concerned about pollution from the use of tar on roadways. Courtesy of the Flyfishers' Club, London, with permission.

Halford was invited by his longtime friend Foster Mortimore to again fish at Mottisfont on 4 June 1886. The wind was out of the northwest, with no mayflies appearing until 3 P.M. and then very few. The alderflies were plentiful.[50] Marryat joined Halford, and they both experienced the pitfalls of striking too quickly when trout are taking the mayfly. At about 6 P.M., Halford spotted a huge trout above a railroad bridge. Marryat refused to go first, giving Halford the honor. Halford cast a Spent Gnat, and "the fish rose with the utmost deliberation."[51] Halford struck too quickly. Marryat exclaimed, "You silly old chump, you pulled away before he could take it."[52] Marryat's turn came; he made a perfect cast within 6 inches of the same trout, and it slowly rose. Marryat struck and missed without touching it. Halford then asked if he should repeat the "silly old chump sentence."[53] For the day, they caught a total of four brace (eight fish), keeping three, but no weights were reported.

On 7 June 1887, Halford and Marryat were at Mottisfont with the wind out of the southeast. Halford was blanked, and Marryat caught a brace of brown trout, one weighing 2 pounds, 15 ounces, the other 2 pounds, 6 ounces. Halford lost a "buster" at the aqueduct, but the diary does not provide any other details.[54]

Halford's last fishing day of the mayfly season in 1889 was June 7. John Day, Marryat, and Halford traveled to Mottisfont as the guests of the Mortimores. The wind came from the northeast, and upon their arrival, spent gnats covered the meadows. Clouds of male gnats were in the air after a morning rainstorm, and after taking shelter in the railroad booking station, the anglers separated to different parts of the river. Halford and Day had the center portion and decided to fish one of the irrigation carriers. Day refused to fish, wanting to see Halford catch a big one. A huge trout rose in the carrier, and Halford crawled into position to fish because, according to Halford, trout feeding on spent gnats are shy and prone to travel or move about. Halford made an underhanded cast, and the fish immediately struck. It went upstream and worked itself into the weeds. Halford lost the fish when the gut line broke, and he was very downhearted. Halford and Day then moved upstream in the carrier just below a brick bridge where another big fish was rising. Halford put on a new Spent Gnat and describes the scene:

> The trout was rising in a small open space below the bridge, and above another fearful tangle of weed. Using all care, and keeping well out of sight, another horizontal cast put the fly on the spot, another bold rise, and I found myself again fast in another big fish. I then did what I ought to have done with the first one, jumped up, and without a moment's consideration skull-dragged the trout over the weed bed and started at a full pace down the stream.
>
> After about thirty yards of this, the fish shook its head with a savage jerk and tried to turn upstream. I simply stopped it by brute force, and once more started dragging it down as fast as I could go. This was repeated several times, and at last, when we were quite 150 yards below the bridge, the fish made a roll on the water and was netted by John Day before it could recover. It was a splendid female fish and weighed 4 lbs. 2 oz.[55]

Marryat also had a successful day, with a trout weighing 3 pounds, 12 ounces.[56]

Halford and Marryat again were invited by Mortimore to fish at Mottisfont on 6 June 1892. Halford provides a detailed description of the day in his autobiography.[57] The day was sweltering hot with little wind. A few mayflies and a good show of spent gnats were on the water. Soon a trout was spotted in some deep, sluggish water cruising in a 5-by-3-square-yard space. Marryat unsuccessfully tried several casts with a mayfly pattern, and Halford was begging that he use a Welshman's Button. Marryat then switched back to another mayfly pattern that did not work. He gave up in disgust, telling Halford to try the Welshman's Button. Halford made a short cast to judge the length, and then placed his fly on the fish. The trout rose to his Welshman's Button, and soon Halford landed a 4-pound, 3-ounce trout with Marryat at the net.[58] This trout would be Halford's largest caught at Mottisfont. It is easy to understand why Halford later leased the Mottisfont river rights. His early visits were with close friends, and his catches were some of his largest on any chalk stream.

Managing a Fishery

During Halford's time, the management of an English fishery was a highly developed endeavor. Property owners and lessees were accustomed to spending significant amounts of time and money attempting to create an enjoyable sporting experience. Consideration and care were given to every aspect and detail necessary to be successful. Halford planned to make Mottisfont an exceptional place, and he devoted much of his time and effort to creating the perfect chalk-stream dry-fly fishery. The result not only made for an enjoyable sporting experience, but it advanced the science and art of angling. In 1903, the Barker-Mills family was leasing the Mottisfont fishing rights to E. Valentine Corrie, Halford's good friend. Halford and Falconer, another rod, joined Corrie in 1905.[59] Corrie and Falconer decided to withdraw, and Halford took sole possession in the spring of 1906.[60] Being in control of a fishery and not having to deal with partners for the first time created the opportunity for Halford's management ideas and practices to be implemented and the results measured. Halford's ideas for development and management of a trout fishery were articulated in 1895 with the publication of his third book, *Making a Fishery*.

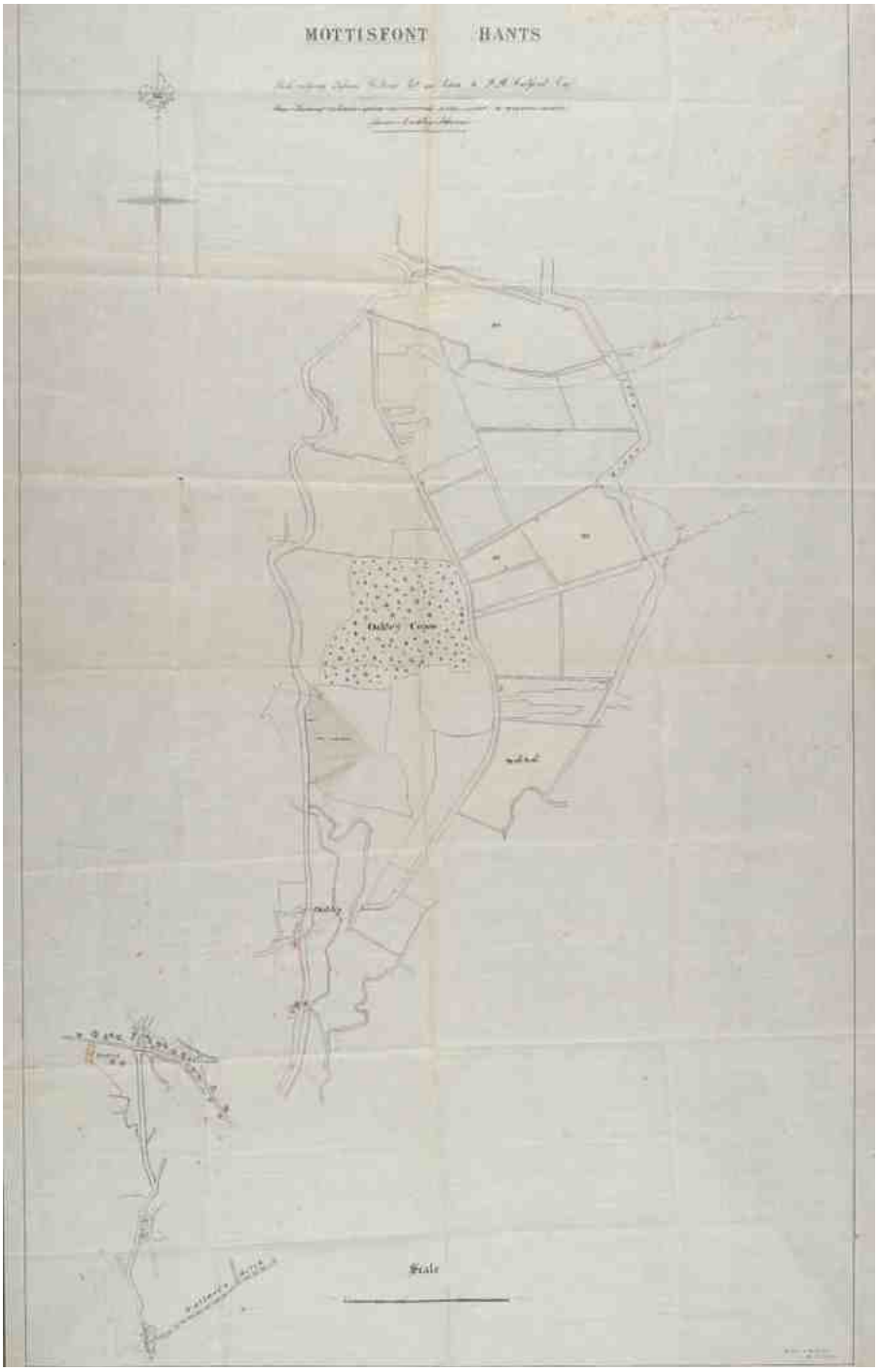
It's not to say that Mottisfont was a totally neglected fishery when it came into Halford's hands. He described the fishery at Mottisfont in 1903 as being "at the lowest possible ebb, containing a large number of pike."[61] When he joined

Corrie in 1905, he considered the water to still be in a "transition stage, suffering partly from the neglect of ages."[62] By the end of 1905, Dick Coxen, the riverkeeper, had killed approximately 800 pike, a damaging predator for young trout, and had done extensive work on clearing the vegetation.[63] When Halford was in control, he was more optimistic about the project's future and pledged to continue the battle against the pike. In 1906, Corrie killed 155 pike weighing 224 pounds; fifty or more pike were killed every year thereafter through 1911.[64] Corrie's stocking and general management was done on a "extravagantly liberal scale and the sport has been almost up to our expectations."[65] Corrie had been making improvements for two years, and he was an expert on the subject of making a quality trout fishery.[66] Halford's 1910 book, *Modern Development of the Dry Fly*, discussed many aspects of managing a fishery, including water selection, riverkeeper qualifications, proper weed cutting, killing the trout's enemies, stocking, and breeding.[67]

Selection of Water

Halford's reputation led people to call on him for advice on all aspects of fly fishing, including the selection of a chalk-stream water. His books *Making a Fishery* (1895) and *The Dry-Fly Man's Handbook* (1913) contained detailed advice on all the important matters to consider when obtaining fishing rights. A major theme through both works and in an article written for *Flyfishers' Journal* was that if the fishing rights for a well-known Hampshire river like the Test became available, you should take them immediately if the term is for a fairly long time with no unreasonable restrictions. Even if there is no time to consult with the previous tenant or inspect the property, you had to act quickly or the opportunity would be lost.[68] These circumstances make it abundantly clear that local knowledge was very important.

Even though there may not have been much time to act in acquiring fishing rights, some time was needed to negotiate a written agreement, and Halford had plenty of advice on what should be in the agreement. A major concern was the lessor's attempts to reserve for himself, family, and friends the right to a rod. Even if the agent's representations were true—that the lessor did not fish at all and he did not allow others to fish—this could all change after the tenant improved the fishery by repairing banks, cutting weeds, stocking fish, and developing the property into a quality fishery.[69]



Plan of land at Oakley, late-nineteenth or early-twentieth century. With permission from the Hampshire Record Office. Reference number 51*M*76-*A*-2*P*-83.

Halford felt that the reputation of the river and the particular part being acquired was of paramount importance. Even if the property had not been well maintained, the water's reputation for catching fish on a dry fly was an important factor. He did not believe one could change the character of the trout in the river by introducing some two-year-old stockers, nor was he interested in water in which the fish did not feed on the surface.[70] Halford was interested in diversity of character of the water on the property. He wanted a property to have a mix of fast-running water, shallow water with clean gravel for spawning, deep pools, and water containing the right weeds that trout could enjoy and thrive in. The amount of mud in the river was also to be considered. Black foul water found in back areas created by decomposing weeds did not create desirable conditions for producing insect life to sustain fish. Pale-colored gritty and sandy mud was more preferable.[71]

In July 1909, Halford noted in his diary that he was analyzing the details of a new lease. This was possibly the acqui-

Netting trout at the fish farm, Lower Chilland, c. 1900. With permission from the Hampshire Record Office. Reference number 41M93/28/1.

sition of additional fishing rights or a renewal of the Mottisfont lease because his family continued on there even after his death.[72]

Riverkeepers

An essential ingredient for a quality chalk-stream fishery was the selection and retention of a competent riverkeeper. The job was and still is a hard one, requiring knowledge of trout, their food, the river, its vegetation, the art of weed cutting, and the removal of predators. Corrie brought Dick Coxon and his family to Mottisfont in September 1903 from the Sowley fishery near the New Forest.[73] Coxon became their first riverkeeper.[74]

Coxon was well thought of by Halford. Halford wrote in *Modern Development of the Dry Fly* of his appreciation of Coxon's "unremitting exertions in carrying out his and my own ideas for improving the sport of the fishing."[75] Halford's thoughts on the attributes of a good keeper were straightforward. He thought that an "honest, sober, hard-working, intelligent man who starts with the intentions of devoting himself to the fishery will generally in a few years gain enough information and experience to be quite a good keeper."[76] Halford recommended the payment of liberal wages and the provision of a comfortable cottage by the stream. He urged owners to treat riverkeepers with courtesy and consideration to retain their services for as long as possible.

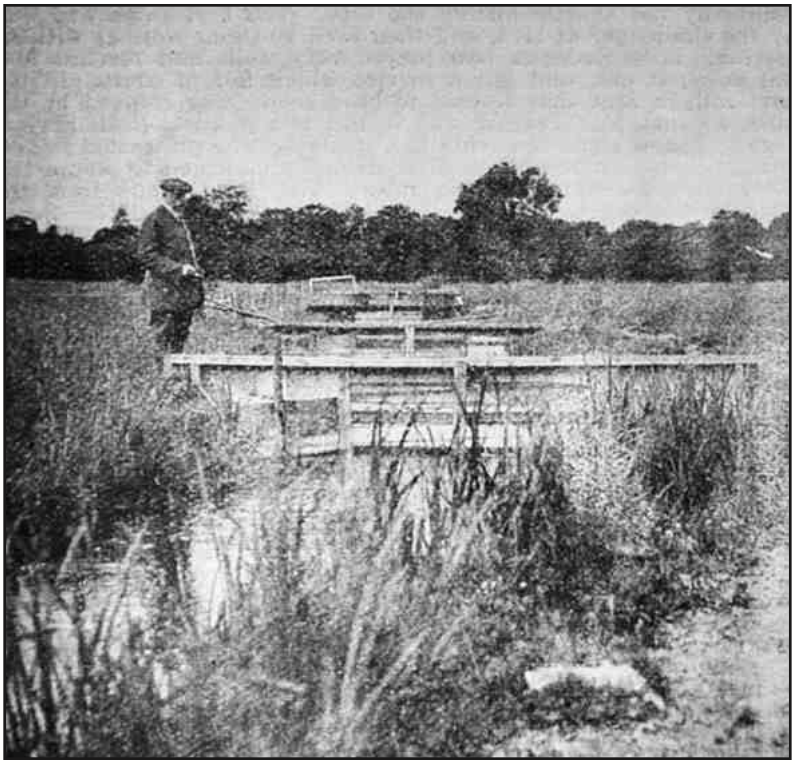
During the fall and winter months, when the fishing season was closed, the riverkeeper had many jobs. Immediately at the close of the fishing season, his main priority was to prepare the water for the natural trout spawn. The weeds were severely cut back and the spawning beds racked to remove any excess mud. The chalk gravel was to be left clean and bright.[77] Halford felt that good keepers would use the winter months wisely by repairing the banks, stiles, and planks; removing mud; building weirs; and constructing piles in the shallows. The estate provided the materials, and a good keeper would do the work himself and occasionally hire local, respectable, and sober unemployed laborers to assist, which to Halford was a better form of charity than distributing alms.[78] Halford was also mindful that the keeper faced a depressing and lonely time in the closed season, so he frequently visited Mottisfont. He believed a good keeper should work with the same zeal and intelligence when the master was gone as when he was with the owner. Halford spoke of the danger of the keeper frequenting the tavern's tap room and becoming a loafer or, even worse, a poacher.[79] Once the fishing season began, the riverkeeper would be found at the water's edge with the angler. His knowledge and experience became invaluable in assisting the owner with the fishing.

Aquatic plants or weeds are necessary if they are of the type to harbor insect life as a food supply for the fish. Halford recognized that weeds also provided shelter. On chalk streams, weeds grow rapidly and must be cut to prevent the water from becoming unfishable. The timing for weed cutting must be coordinated with others along the river to prevent ruining a neighbor's sport.

Halford noted that weed cutting "is a question of requiring patient and intelligent study."[80] The object is to maintain the river in a state most favorable to the sport, taking into consideration all the conditions of the water—i.e., fast, slow, shallow, deep, needs for shelter, and types of weeds in the river. Achieving a balance between cutting the weeds too severely, thereby destroying the food supply and adequate shelter, and letting the river become overgrown and preventing any fishing was an art unto itself. Because trout will take up in the weeds, cutting should keep the surface clear so a dry fly can be used when fishing.[81]

The removal of mud during the closed season is most important. The best practice is to dig it out and place it on the bank, *not* to rake it up and let it

Halford's modern fishing stew showing stew covered with saplings and sedge providing shelter for trout, c. 1910. With permission of the National Trust, Mottisfont.



Photograph of the fishing stews adjoining the Oakley Stream. From H. Hammond Smith, "An Experiment in the Treatment of Furunculosis," The Field *(8 March 1913, vol. 121, no. 3147).*

float downstream toward a neighbor, a practice that was not only illegal but unsportsmanlike.[82]

Another topic Halford spent time reporting about was controlling the trout's enemies. He classified the trout's enemies by categories: men, birds, otters, fish, and insect larvae. The village poacher was a major problem, and Halford's contempt for such men was expressed by describing a poacher as an "idle, dissolute vagabond, who will not work" and not even dare to commit larceny. These types were low in Halford's mind, as they would not even risk game poaching because of stiff punishments and strict enforcement of the game laws. Fish poachers were treated with leniency by the courts, and those merchants who purchased the fish at below-market prices also went unpunished.[83] Halford did observe that all poaching had been on the decline because of the higher educational standards of the citizens and the disgrace of being before a magistrate, as well as because of improved living conditions. Villagers were more self-respecting and locals were less inclined to drink, so the old-timer poachers were no longer squandering money in pubs.[84]

Halford placed the pike as the most devastating enemy of the trout and declared war on it. Francis Francis also put the pike at the head of the list before poachers.[85] Halford said that the "paramount duty" of every owner was "killing down pike by every available means and on every available day of the year."[86] Halford also details other pike removal methods, including spinning with natural or artificial baits, wiring, trimmering, and netting.[87] Pike removal at Mottisfont was necessary, with 800 killed in 1903 alone and another 452 in the next six years.[88]

Trout ova, alevins, and fry are part of the food chain for swans, ducks, and mud hens. Kingfishers feed on fry and yearlings, whereas herons will kill the largest of trout. Halford recommends "all legitimate means" to keep these bird populations to a minimum.[89] Otters were always a problem, but easily controlled with the help of a hunter with a pack of otter hounds.[90]

Fishing Stew

The purpose of an English fishing stew was to have a permanent place to generously feed yearling trout before placing them in the river. Halford's ideas on the proper construction of a fishing stew changed substantially from his concepts introduced in *Making a Fishery*, published in 1895. Originally, Halford's design for the ideal stew was an 85-foot-by-9½-foot channel with a hard gravel bottom and a 20-foot-by-12½-foot tiled-roof brick shed at the end. It was similar to a hatchery in appearance. Yearlings were purchased, heavily fed, and then turned out into the river as two-year-olds.[91] Halford reasoned that large fish were not to be included in the stew because they monopolized the food and frightened the smaller ones, who became stunted.[92]

After seven years of operating his own fishery, his improved version, described in *The Dry-Fly Man's Handbook*, was more practical and allowed for greater research potential. The new version was to be made in a natural carrier in a nearby meadow, 55 yards long, 12 feet wide, with a depth of 2 feet, 6 inches at normal summer levels. A constant water supply flowing over hard, clean gravel was essential. The stew was divided into four compartments, with the upstream part for yearlings, the second part for two-year-olds, the third for wild fish, and the fourth for experimenting. Screens were placed in the channel to separate each compartment. Shade was made for the trout by building frames of half saplings and galvanized wire netting and covering them with sedge, a course grass found in nearby swamps.[93] Halford's stew resembled a river more than the earlier rigid designs with a building. Halford's stew may have been on Oakley Stream just upstream of the fishing hut. The National Trust at Mottisfont has an 1896 ordinance survey map showing a hand-drawn "hatch" where water flows out of the stream on the east bankside and returns farther downstream.[94] This hatch was located on the Oakley beat close enough to his hut to allow for convenient scientific work.

No explanation is given as to why the yearlings were in the first section and the two-year-olds in the second section. Halford also did not specifically mention if the first section was upstream of the others. If the first section was in fact upstream, then he would have reversed the normal river situation, in which the larger fish take the upstream position. He had specific views about the fish he raised for river stocking. Yearlings were usually purchased from a local hatchery, raised for a year, and then released as two-year-olds. Some fish might be kept longer, but Halford did not believe that large fish should be saved in a stew and then released. The introduction of stew-raised 3- or 4-pound trout was not acceptable.

Halford addressed the feeding of trout while detained in a stew. In *Making a Fishery*, Halford explained an 1893 experiment using different types of food for yearling trout. Although fish breeders used horse flesh, he used minced liver and lights (lung) because horse flesh was not readily available in the country.[95] The yearling trout were fed twice daily, and Halford observed that some were

growing faster than the rest. The stronger fish were getting more than their fair share. Approximately 160 of the longer fish were removed from the stew and placed in the river. The remaining fish began to grow rapidly. Three months later, 130 of the larger fish were removed and placed in the river. The results were most satisfying to Halford, not only because of the weight gain, but also because of the overall condition of the fish as two-year-olds.[96]

Halford had some rainbow trout brought to Mottisfont in 1906. Rainbow trout had been introduced in England in the late nineteenth century. They were reproducing well in lakes and ponds, but not in the chalk streams of southern England. They seemed to disappear after being introduced in a river. Conventional wisdom said that because rainbows were migratory fish, they went downstream to the sea. In 1906, Halford was of the opinion that rainbows could be bred in captivity and introduced into suitable stretches of the river where they would remain if hand fed occasionally by the riverkeeper. Halford arranged with T. E. Vicker—a neighbor who maintained rainbows in a fast-flowing stream—to provide thirty trout, which were introduced to Mottisfont's stream on 19 September 1906. After a few months of the keeper's morning feeding, the rainbows stayed. The population stayed intact until the spawn, and then they disappeared. By April 4, no rainbows could be found, and Halford concluded that the experiment, although unsuccessful in keeping rainbows in his river, confirmed that they apparently dropped downstream.[97]

Packing trout at the fish farm at Lower Chilland, c. 1899. With permission from the Hampshire Record Office. Reference number 41M93/69/1.

Halford's diaries indicate that during the fishing season, it was not uncommon for him to catch fish in the river and release them into the stew. Toward the end of the season, he would take undersized wild trout caught in the river and place them in the stew. He would select healthy and good-conditioned fish of about ¾ pound and feed them well for a few days before returning them back into the river, considering them to still be wild fish.[98] On 8 August 1908, for example, he took sixteen fish out of the river and placed them in the stew.[99]

Well-dressed chalk-stream anglers. Courtesy of the National Trust, Mottisfont.

Halford's Friends

An interesting aspect of Halford's time at Mottisfont was that he fished less than before and apparently enjoyed making his waters available to his friends for their sport.[100] G. E. M. Skues never fished at Mottisfont, having publicly come to a parting of the ways with Halford on several issues, including the effectiveness of the sunk fly and the use of American 8-weight rods on chalk streams.[101] Although Skues was asked to contribute a section on dry-fly dressing to Halford's 1897 *Dry Fly Entomology*, by 1904, Skues had made numerous public statements in the angling press that proved to be the forerunner of the conflict to come. Halford was convinced from his experience that Skues's wet-fly fishing methods on chalk streams led to large catches of undersized fish.[102]

Ernest Pain was Halford's friend who fished at Mottisfont on numerous occasions. He was fishing Oakley Stream when he noticed the effect of different lights on a fly.

> There was dark undergrowth on one side of the river and I noticed that the fish rose at the fly I was using when it was on their left side—that is, the side on which the growth was; so I told my host that his fish could see better with their left eye than with their right. It would seem that the dark background made my fly look more like the one they wanted.[103]

Pain fished at the Mottisfont with Halford twice in 1906.[104] Pain's first visit to Oakley Stream was on Monday, June 11, and the wind was out of the northeast. He caught one male trout weighing 2 pounds, 6 ounces, on a male Welshman's

Button[105] and one grayling weighing 1 pound, 4 ounces. Halford and another individual named Kendle each caught one fish and returned them. Halford noted in his diary that there was no rise until 9 P.M. Pain's second visit was unproductive; he caught only undersized fish. Small fish thereafter became known as "Pains."[106]

"Fish the Old Streams"

An American view of fishing an English chalk stream was expressed by Theodore Gordon in a 1 September 1906 article titled "From the Beaverkill," originally published in the *Fishing Gazette*.

> Personally, I would rather fish the old streams which have been known to anglers for generations, where the trout are hard to take and where there are many natural flies. Here, whether we fish wet or dry, some little time devoted to the study of entomology is not wasted, but adds greatly to our pleasure, often to our success. . . .
>
> Yet I imagine that all flyfishers would enjoy and profit by a visit to the Test and Itchen. There, if one is lucky, he may see some of the great past masters of the dry fly at work, men who think, talk and breathe feathers, quills, hackles and perfect dry flies, who can drive twenty-five yards of heavy line in the teeth of a gale of wind and place a tiny dun or spinner, floating and cocked, a few inches above a rising trout. It must be confessed that this is the perfection of the art.[107]

Halford never physically fished American waters, but his work and ideas have influenced how Americans have pursued the sport. There is much to be learned about the art of dry-fly fishing from him. Studying Halford's life, writing, legacy, and the chalk streams themselves gives every angler the opportunity to move forward toward a better understanding of angling history. Look for the pearls and keep an open mind, because the journey continues.

Acknowledgments

The author wishes to express his special thanks for their assistance to Angling Auctions for arranging a viewing and opportunity to study all three volumes of Halford's fishing diaries after the April 2005 auction; to Anna Day, volunteer archivist with the National Trust at Mottisfont; to Commander T. H. Boycott, OBE RN, secretary, Flyfishers' Club of London; to David J. Kelly, United States Library of Congress; and to my assistant, Melinda (Penny) Pando.

Endnotes

1. The name *Mottisfont* may have come from the Old English *motes funta*, meaning "spring near the confluence" or "spring of the moot." Cathal Moore, Graham Stuart Thomas, and David Stone, *Mottisfont Abbey, Garden, House and Estate* (London: Centurion Press Ltd., 2004), 3.
2. Theodore Gordon, "News of Mr. Halford's Death in America and Other Notes," (from Mr. T. Gordon, *Fishing Gazette*, 9 May 1914 reprint), in John McDonald, ed., *The Complete Fly Fisherman: The Notes and Letters of Theodore Gordon* (Norwalk, Conn.: The Easton Press, 1995), 362.
3. Arnold Gingrich, *The Fishing in Print: A Guided Tour through Five Centuries of Angling Literature* (New York: Winchester Press, 1974), 204.
4. Paul Schullery, ed., *Halford on the Dry Fly: Stream Craft of a Master Angler* (Mechanicsburg, Pa.; Stackpole Books, 2007), ix.
5. Moore et al., *Mottisfont Abbey, Garden, House and Estate*, 5.
6. John Hare, *The Dissolution of the Monasteries in Hampshire*, Hampshire Papers No. 16 (Winchester, England: Hampshire Printing Services, 1999), 1.
7. Ibid., 14.
8. Moore et al., *Mottisfont Abbey, Garden, House and Estate*, 21.
9. Izaak Walton, *The Compleat Angler* (New York: Weathervane Books, 1975), 122.
10. A. G. Bradley, *The Rivers and Streams of England* (London: Bracken Books, 1993; reprint of 1909 edition [London: Adam & Charles Black]), 47.
11. Sir Edward Grey, *Fly Fishing* (London: J. M. Dent & Sons, Ltd., 1993), 25.
12. Harold Russell, *Chalkstream and Moorland* (London: Smith, Elder & Co., 1911), 55. Eight years earlier, in 1903, Halford credited George S. Marryat with naming the Test "the queen of chalkstreams" (Frederic M. Halford, *An Angler's Autobiography* [London: Vinton & Co., Ltd., 1903], 252).
13. Dermot Wilson, quoted in magazine advertisement *Fly Fisherman* (Spring special edition 1978, vol. 9, no. 3), S134.
14. Noreen O'Dell, *The River Test* (South Hampton: Paul Cave Publications, Ltd., 1979), 5.
15. Frederic M. Halford, *Making a Fishery* (London: Vinton & Co., Ltd., 1902), 28.
16. John Waller Hills, *My Sporting Life* (Ashburton, U.K.: The Flyfisher's Classic Library, 2000), 138. Hills had a rod at Mottisfont for the 1924 season and describes his fishing experiences in Chapter 11.
17. Maureen Westwood, *Mottisfont & Dunbridge: Stories from the Test Valley* (Eastleigh, U.K.: privately printed, ISBN 09510537 1 x; 1988), 6.
18. Ralph Collins was the head riverkeeper at Mottisfont for Sir Owen Aisher, and his wife's great-grandfather's surname was Billacombe. Charles Bingham, *Chalk Stream Salmon & Trout Fishing* (Shrewsbury, U.K.: Swan Hill Press, 1993), 50.
19. John Waller Hills, *A Summer on the Test* (Devon, U.K.: The Flyfisher's Classic Library, 1996), 80–81.
20. Tony Hayter, *F. M. Halford and the Dry-Fly Revolution* (London: Robert Hale, Ltd., 2002), 15.
21. The family name change may have been done to avoid the obvious connection between the clothing trade and sweat shops (Hayter, *F. M. Halford and the Dry-Fly Revolution,* 17–18).

A page from the photograph album of the Edwards family of Mottisfont Rectory and Awbridge Danes, 1906–1931. Clockwise, from top left: Bathing pool at Oakley Stream; Oakley Oak; and two members of the Halford family.With permission from the Hampshire Record Office. Reference number 22A03/1.

22. Ibid., 215.
23. Ibid., 207.
24. Ibid., 208.
25. Frederic M. Halford, *Diary II*. The diaries will be referenced as *Diary I* (2 April 1879 through 18 October 1899), *Diary II* (21 April 1900 through 13 April 1907), and *Diary III* (3 April 1907 through 24 October 1913). *Diary III* continues after Halford's death with entries made by his son Ernest Halford (1 April 1907 through 23 September 1928).
26. Halford, *Diary III*, 1908 Summary.
27. Hayter, *F. M. Halford and the Dry-Fly Revolution*, 21.
28. Ibid., 67. The original Houghton Club was founded in 1822 and is still in existence. Halford's syndicate lost the lease in 1886 as a result of failed negotiations with the landowner.
29. John Halford, preface to reprint of Frederic M. Halford's *An Angler's Autobiography* (Ashburton, Devon, U.K.: The Flyfisher's Classic Library, 1998).
30. John Waller Hills, *A History of Fly Fishing for Trout* (Norwalk, Conn.: The Easton Press, 1997), 129–30.
31. Tony Hayter, Introduction. In: Tony Hayter, Donald Overfield, Timothy Benn, Kenneth Robson, and G. E. M. Skues, *The Way of a Man with a Nymph: The Nymph Dressings of G. E. M. Skues* (Brookfield, U.K.: Creel Press, 2005), 22.
32. Halford's books are *Floating Flies & How to Dress Them* (London: Samson Low, Marston, Searle & Rivington, 1886), *Dry-Fly Fishing in Theory and Practice* (London: Samson Low, Marston, Searle & Rivington, 1889), *Making a Fishery* (London: Horace Cox, 1895), *Dry Fly Entomology* (London: Vinton & Co., Ltd., 1897), *An Angler's Autobiography* (London: Vinton & Co., Ltd., 1903), *Modern Development of the Dry Fly* (London: George Routledge & Sons, 1910), and *The Dry-Fly Man's Handbook* (London: George Routledge & Sons, 1913).
33. William Senior, "Fishing Days with Halford," *Flyfishers' Journal* (Spring 1914, vol. 2, no. 3), 55.
34. Halford, *Modern Development*, 7.
35. Tony Hayter, introduction to reprint of Halford's *Modern Development of the Dry Fly* (Hampstead, U.K.: The Flyfisher's Classic Library, 2005), ix.
36. Halford, *Diary I, Diary II,* and *Diary III.*
37. Peter Lapsley, *River Fishing: The Complete Guide* (London: Robert Hale, 2003), 27.
38. T. E. Pryce-Tannatt, "An Edwardian Contemplates," in Kenneth Robson, ed., *Flyfishers' Progress* (London: Flyfishers' Club, 2000), 74.
39. Conrad Voss Bark, *The Dry Fly: Progress since Halford* (Ludlow, U.K.: Merlin Unwin Books, 1996), 9.
40. Brian Clarke and John Goddard, *The Trout and the Fly* (London: A. C. Black, 1995), 72–73, 84–85.
41. Kenneth Robson, ed., *The Essential G. E. M. Skues* (New York: The Lyons Press by special arrangement with A&C Black, Ltd., London,1988), 105.
42. Tony Hayter extensively analyzed all three volumes of Halford's diaries as well as Halford's field notes used for preparation of the diaries before the Halford family sold them—along with Halford's library, manuscripts, photographs, maps, and letters—at a London public sale conducted by Angling Auctions of London on 2 April 2005.
43. Halford, *Diary III*, 7–9 May 1912.
44. Frederic M. Halford, *The Dry-Fly Man's Handbook* (Lyon, Miss.: Derrydale Press, Inc., 1994), 20. Hardy Bros. also used this quote in their publications; see *Hardy's Angler's Guide*, 53rd ed. (Glasgow, U.K.: The University Press, 1931), 252 and Halford, *Diary III*, 7–9 May 1912.
45. Hayter, *F. M. Halford and the Dry-Fly Revolution*, 239.
46. Ibid., 240.
47. Halford, *Diary I*, 1 June 1882.
48. Ibid., 2 June 1884.
49. Quoted in Hayter, *F. M. Halford and the Dry-Fly Revolution*, 105.
50. Halford, *Diary I*, 4 June 1886.
51. Halford, *An Angler's Autobiography*, 126.
52. Ibid., 127.
53. Ibid.
54. Halford, *Diary I*, 7 June 1887.
55. Halford, *An Angler's Autobiography*, 149–50.
56. Ibid., 150.
57. Halford, *An Angler's Autobiography*, 186–88.
58. Ibid., 188.
59. Frederic M. Halford, "The Log of a Dry Fly Man," *The Field* (15 April 1905, vol. 2724), 617.
60. Frederic M. Halford, "The Log of a Dry Fly Man," *The Field* (9 February 1907, vol. 2824), 206.
61. Halford, *Modern Development of the Dry Fly*, 95.
62. Ibid., 96.
63. Halford, *The Dry-Fly Man's Handbook,* 362.
64. Ibid.
65. Halford, *Modern Development of the Dry Fly*, 97.
66. Corrie owned a hatchery at Chilland and was well respected by the chalk-stream owners and fishery lessees for his knowledge of trout. He was commissioned in 1908 to develop recommendations for the improvement of trout fisheries south of Winchester on the River Itchen. Corrie made a personal inspection of seven fisheries for his report. His scheme for improving the fishing included specific recommendations for restocking new and better fish; removing old fishing stock, eels, and pike; coordinating weed cutting; and preparing and maintaining redds. E. Valentine Corrie, *Report on Itchen River Fisheries South of Winchester* (Winchester, U.K.: Warren & Son, 1909), Hampshire Record Office, Reference Number 111M94W/X1/13.
67. Halford's *Making a Fishery* was published in 1895, and Part III of *Modern Development of the Dry Fly* was an updated rewrite reflecting his opinion of all his major topics relating to the creation and management of a private fishery.
68. Ken Robson, ed., *Flyfishers' Progress*, 5; Halford, *The Dry-Fly Man's Handbook*, 303.
69. Halford, *The Dry-Fly Man's Handbook*, 304–05.
70. Ibid., 305–06.
71. Ibid., 309.
72. Halford, *Diary III*, 14 July 1909.
73. Hayter, *F. M. Halford and the Dry-Fly Revolution*, 199.
74. Westwood, *Mottisfont & Dunbridge*, 3.
75. Quoted in Hayter, *F. M. Halford and the Dry-Fly Revolution*, 199–200.
76. Halford, *The Dry-Fly Man's Handbook*, 323.
77. Halford, *The Dry-Fly Man's Handbook*, 324–25.
78. Ibid.
79. Ibid., 324.
80. Halford, *Making a Fishery*, 46.
81. See Chapter IV in *Making a Fishery* (pp. 44–69) and Part III, Chapter III in *The Dry-Fly Man's Handbook* (pp. 341–54), in which Halford covers all aspects of weeds and weed cutting on southern chalk streams.
82. Halford, *The Dry-Fly Man's Handbook*; see Chapter II, "General Management" (pp. 320–40) and Chapter III, "Weeds and Weed Cutting" (pp. 341–54).
83. Halford, *The Dry-Fly Man's Handbook*, 356.
84. Ibid., 357.
85. Ibid., 359.
86. Ibid., 360.
87. Ibid., 362–68.
88. Ibid., 362.
89. Ibid., 357–58.
90. Ibid., 358.
91. Halford, *Making a Fishery*, 146.
92. Ibid., 165.
93. Halford, *The Dry-Fly Man's Handbook*, 385–91.
94. G. Phillips & Son Maps & Charts, London, *Ordinance Survey* 1896 (2nd ed.), Hampshire Sheet XL VIII.3; scale 25 inches = 1 mile. Hayter, in *F. M. Halford and the Dry-Fly Revolution*, describes the stew at Mottisfont being 55 yards long, 4 yards wide, and with two screens (p. 204).
95. Halford, *Making a Fishery*, 158–59. Liver would sink and lights would float, so Halford recommended mixing two parts liver to one part lights, ever mindful that his mixture would educate the yearlings to feed on the surface.
96. Ibid., 160–62.
97. Halford, "The Log of a Dry Fly Man," *The Field* (13 April 1907, vol. 2833), 590.
98. Halford, *The Dry-Fly Man's Handbook*, 392.
99. Halford, *Diary III*, 8 August 1908.
100. Hayter, *F. M. Halford and the Dry-Fly Revolution*, 205.
101. Tony Hayter, Introduction, *Modern Development of the Dry Fly* (Moretonhampstead, U.K.: Flyfisher's Classic Library Edition, 2005), xx.
102. Andrew Herd, "Frederic M. Halford: The Myth and the Man," *The American Fly Fisher* (Winter 2002, vol. 28, no. 1), 17.
103. Ernest Pain, *Fifty Years on the Test* (London: Phillip Allan & Co., Ltd., 1934), 40–41.
104. Halford, *Diary II*, 11 June 1906.
105. Ibid.
106. Hayter, *F. M. Halford and the Dry-Fly Revolution,* 205.
107. John McDonald, ed., *The Complete Fly Fisherman: The Notes and Letters of Theodore Gordon* (Norwalk, Conn.: The Easton Press, 1995), 141.

Frank W. Benson: Artist and Angler

by Gerald Karaska

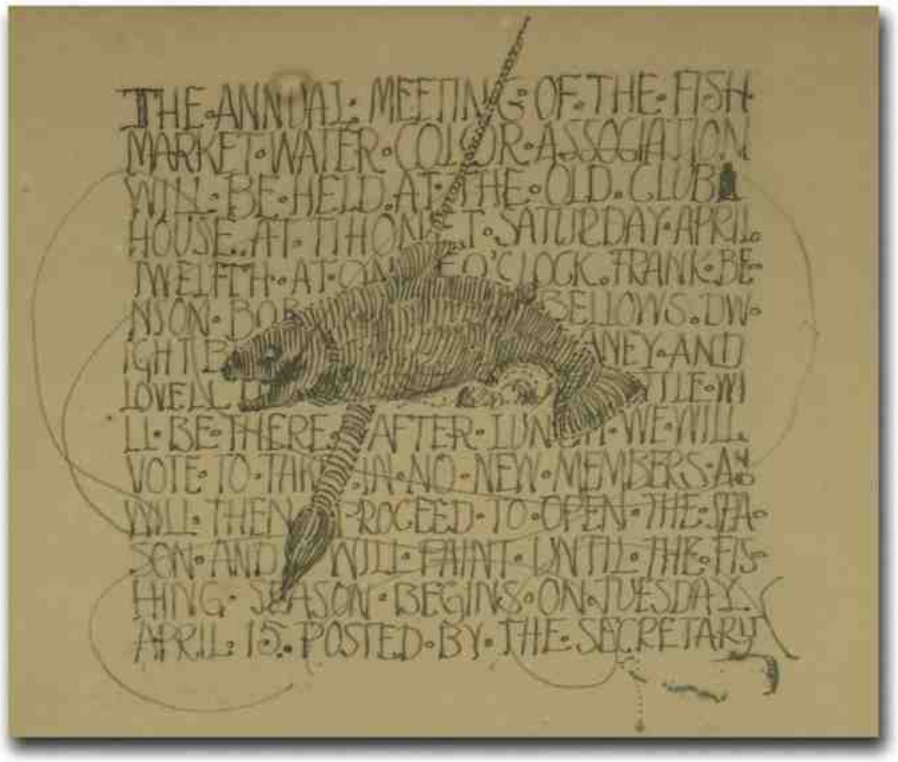


Figure 1. F. W. Benson, Fish Market Water Color Association. From the collection of the American Museum of Fly Fishing.

Frank Benson (1862–1951) is regarded as one of America's premier artists. His reputation was established at the turn of the twentieth century by his numerous awards and by high demand for his impressionist paintings. Benson's popularity was further secured when he began to produce wildfowling art and a prodigious number of intaglio prints.

Over the years, only a small part of his reputation could be attributed to his angling art. From the early 1920s to his death in 1951, Benson produced more than two hundred oils, watercolors, and etchings of salmon and trout fishing. Even today, very little acclaim is given to this facet of his sporting art. Yet his angling art is a clear reflection of the special character and personality of the artist and of his enormous skills as a sportsman.

Apparent first and foremost in his art is Benson's *love of nature,* which was complemented by his avid participation in physical sports.[1] Early in life he boxed, played tennis, sailed, and pursued many activities that required physical dexterity and agility. He was a big man in every way—hale, hearty, and strong—and he excelled at all the sports he tried. Throughout his life his favorite pursuits were hunting and fishing. No doubt these were encouraged by the proximity of the marshes and streams close to his home in Salem, on the northern coast of Massachusetts, where he lived his entire life.

Many who so avidly admire Benson's artistry also strive to understand the inherent content and style of the beauty he created. The innate sensuousness of his work, his awareness of the moods and rhythms of nature, and his ability to capture the mysteries of changing light reflect his personal experiences both as a participant in and an observer of nature.

In his sporting life, as in his art, Benson's intensity and dedication to completing a task are evident. Many references in the literature attest to numerous episodes when, luck aside, he downed the most ducks, caught the most and the biggest fish, and spent the most time on the water. This was not, in any sense, a competition with his companions. Benson simply possessed the ability to concentrate intensely on those things he loved to do—in sport as well as in art.

Another hallmark in all of Benson's sporting activities was his congeniality. He seemed to enjoy his outdoor activities most when he was in the company of others. His most frequent companions were members of his family. Indeed, his family was the cornerstone of his life. They joined him in everyday activities and in all manner of outdoor adventures, and they were often with him on his fishing trips. His only son, George, was his most frequent companion, and his wife, Eleanor, was with him when he fished for trout in Wareham, Massachusetts. Although his daughters often joined him for archery, sailing, and lawn sports, they only occasionally accompanied their father on his fishing expeditions.

During his twenty-four years as a teacher at the School of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, Benson enjoyed friendly relationships with many students. He formed close bonds with fellow artists who belonged to such formal art associations as the Guild of Boston Artists, the Society of American Artists, and The Ten, with whom he exhibited paintings. Many of the collectors of Benson's art also became close friends and lifelong fishing partners.

Benson frequently joined with his friends to create informal clubs or associations. For example, at the Tihonet Fishing Club, Benson and his artist friends formed the Fish Market Water Color Association and the Fish Market Water Color and Benevolent Association; at his duck-hunting cottage in Eastham on Cape Cod, he established a muskrat hunting club, the Eastham Fur Company; on a trip to the Caribbean, the Dude Club comprised his travel companions; and, at his summer home on North Haven Island, he invented a game called Fat Man's Baseball, in which the players tied two pillows around their waists as they played. Figure 1 is a sketch by Benson that nicely describes one club:

> The annual meeting of the Fish Market Water Color Association will be held at the old club house at Tihonet, Saturday, April twelfth at one o'clock. Frank Benson, Bob Bellows, Dwight Blaney, and Lovell Little will be there after lunch. We will vote to take in no new members and will then proceed to open the season and will paint until the fishing season begins on Tuesday April 15. Posted by the Secretary.

Such camaraderie is not unusual among anglers, but the strength of these bonds for Benson was exceptional. This may seem to contradict the notion that angling is considered a solitary sport, requiring great concentration. Few men were as dedicated to the act of fishing as Benson. But the one does not exclude the other; while he greatly enjoyed the companionship of other fishermen, once on the stream or in the canoe, he shed that gregariousness and focused on catching fish.

Prodigious Painter

Frank Benson experienced a long and rewarding artistic life. He first worked in portraiture, winning many prizes, the first in 1891. Subsequently, he won awards and recognition almost every year. He began exhibiting landscapes as early as 1895. For twenty years, through the turn of the century, Benson focused on sunlit plein-air paintings of his children running through meadows, sailing, and exploring the beaches of their summer home in Wooster Cove, Maine. But approaching the height of this work, the artist felt the need to explore new media and motifs.

It is worthy of note that Benson did not begin to work in watercolors until 1921 when on a salmon fishing trip to Canada. Following his son George's advice, he took along the necessary equipment. Thus began nearly three decades of remarkable accomplishments in this genre of angling art.

Benson's angling art differed significantly from others in that many of his paintings did not include a fisherman. When an angler was present, the image was small. Benson was in fact more likely to paint those who worked on the river as a guide, cook, or porter. Another common motif was simply a canoe or two, clear symbols of an angling scene.

Benson's angling art is prodigious. Research has identified 110 paintings and twenty-six etchings that clearly refer to salmon riverscapes (twenty additional

Figure 2. F. W. Benson, Fly Fisherman *(private collection), 1936.*

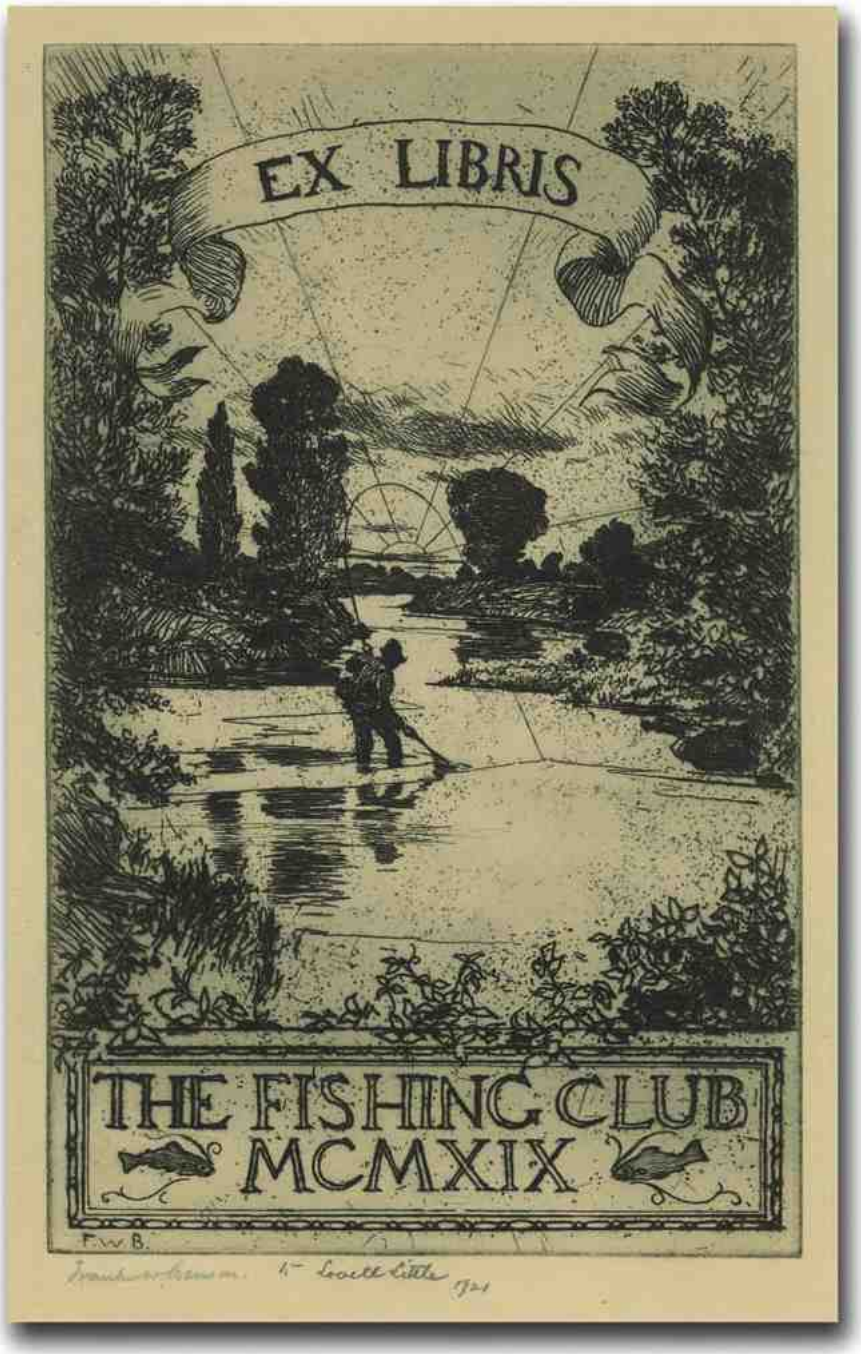


Figure 3. F. W. Benson, Bookplate: The Fishing Club.
From the collection of the American Museum of Fly Fishing.

images could be classified as related riverscapes). There are thirteen paintings and eight etchings that depict trout streamscapes (he did twenty-nine additional paintings as related streamscapes).

Cataloguing Frank Benson's paintings is a difficult task. In his lifetime he produced more than two thousand oils and watercolors. However, he did not keep a record of his work, nor did he identify the purchasers (largely because practically all were sold by several art dealers). Often a title, assigned by the dealer, was the only reference (sometimes a different dealer assigned *another* title). It also was his habit to give his paintings to friends, many of whom were fishing or hunting pals. Some of his closest friends compiled large numbers of his works.

Riverscapes, Streamscapes, and Following the Light

The landscape genre in art obviously has a very long history, but the terms *riverscape* and *streamscape* more clearly describe Benson's angling images. Most importantly, although the terms refer to the waters where salmon and trout are found, they accentuate Benson's artistic insights, which focus on the play of light on sky and water. Benson urged his daughter Eleanor not to get carried away by the charm of things but to arrange them so that the light was beautiful. "Don't paint anything but the effect of light. . . . Don't paint things . . . at all times observe minutely the delicate variation of value between one thing and another or between light and shadow. Follow the light."[2]

Benson's angling art was distinctive in another way. His scenes did not depict real anglers facing real angling situations, nor angling action, nor the thrill of the sport (the contest or drama between man and fish). He rarely painted a fish as a trophy; in fact, one rarely sees a fish in the scene (and this was the art of a man who excelled at catching fish!). The lack of fishermen and quarry seem surprising indeed.

Water is always a presence in Benson's angling art. It is obvious, of course, that there should be water where there is fishing, but it is the reflective surface of water that allowed Benson to paint the delicate and distinctive variations of light and shadow. That surface subtlety, especially quiet pools and rapids, becomes a counterpoint with the sky to provide the distinguishing values in his paintings. His impressionism eliminated details and allowed him to paint angling places as a synergism of light, shadow, and color. He avoided strong lines and downplayed accuracy of the human figure so as to create a personal response to what he felt about nature.

For Benson, catching fish was important for being outdoors, but his art expressed other things. For example, he frequently included guides in his paintings. Benson marveled at the skill of the guide poling a canoe laden with gear and fishermen, especially upstream through heavy currents and numerous boulders. He knew that these guides spent all of their lives in the wilderness carefully observing nature, and he felt a strong bond with them. Benson's guides did not often comment on their surroundings, but he was aware that their senses were keenly tuned to the subtleties of nature, and his paintings reveal this understanding.

Early Trout-Stream Fishing

Trout fishing was clearly one of Frank Benson's passions. It allowed him to experience nature at an intimate level, and it became one subject of his art. As a boy and young man, he avidly fished the streams near his Salem home, but he also found the streams of Cape Cod attractive.

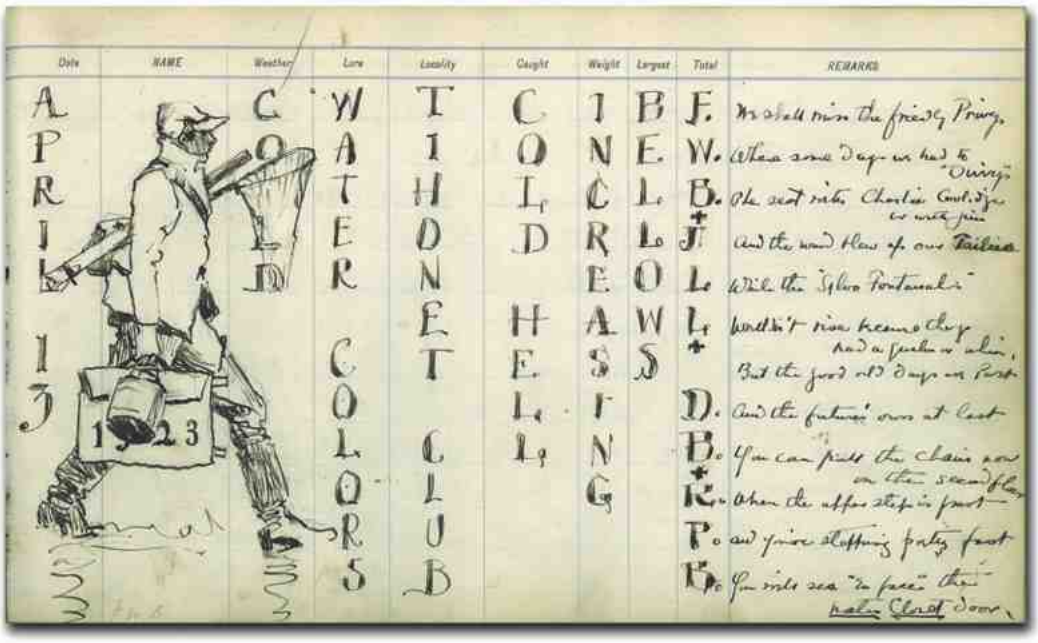


Figure 4. F. W. Benson, Tihonet Club logbook 1923. From the collection of the American Museum of Fly Fishing.

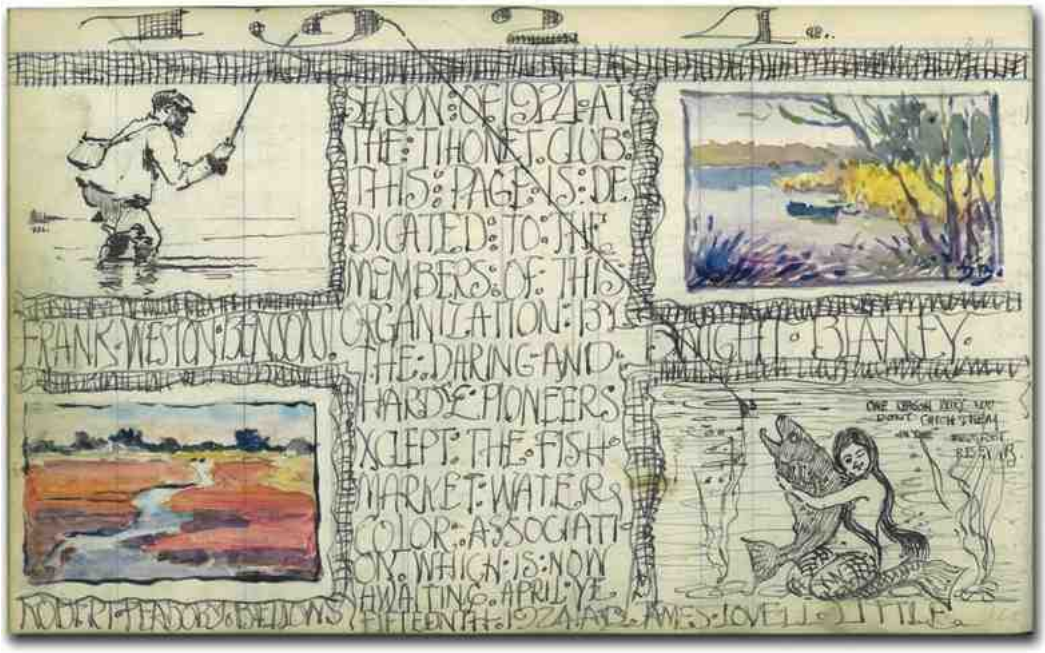


Figure 5. F. W. Benson, Tihonet Club logbook 1924. From the collection of the American Museum of Fly Fishing.

Figure 2 is an early painting by Benson, presumably of a small coastal stream.

Extensive diaries dating from 1888 (when he was twenty-six years old) to 1909 describe Benson's numerous local fishing trips.[3] The diary notes reveal routines he established and followed throughout his angling life: fishing with family and friends, and regularly fishing the same streams.

His most frequent companions were his brothers-in-law Harry Richardson and Maurice Richardson. Other partners were artists such as Philip Little, Willard Metcalf, Abbott Thayer, Alexander Pope, Bela Pratt, and Aiden Southard, but also included close friends John C. Phillips, Arthur Cabot, and Gus Hemenway. Benson noted in his fishing diary that on 26 April 1903, his son George (then twelve years old) became a regular fishing companion.

Benson's early catches were sporadic. Often he caught only a few small fish but sometimes landed a couple of large trout. In an astonishing entry on 15 September 1890 (while fishing with Thayer, Southard, and Peale, he reported: "a hundred in all the largest [his] was one-quarter pound. Thayer got one of just one pound and Southard a big one of nearly two pounds. Peale also got one of one pound. . . . The trout were of a gold bronze color, very dark—the handsomest dark trout I ever saw and brilliantly marked."

The Old and Dear Tihonet Club

Among Benson's favorite fishing waters for trout were those of the Tihonet Club in Wareham, Massachusetts, less than a mile from the Cape Cod Canal. The club was established in August 1891. The watershed comprised small, cold, spring-fed streams flowing from a nearby forest (now the Myles Standish State Forest). The flow of water was controlled by numerous reservoirs that regulated the levels in bogs so that cranberry cultivation could be effectively managed. Fishing was done from canoes on the reservoirs

and drainage channels, as well as by wading. Figure 3 is a lithograph bookplate by Benson for the Tihonet Club.

Benson's first entry in the club's logs was on 14 May 1899, when, as a guest of his brother-in-law Dr. Maurice Richardson, the two caught thirty trout weighing a total of 7½ pounds.[4] Richardson nominated Benson for membership in 1899, and Benson began fishing as a member on 7 April 1901.

Until later in life, Benson always fished in the company of his friends, who included family, artists, and collectors. The logs also reveal that Benson fully enjoyed the club as a family setting. On numerous occasions, Benson and Richardson had supper at the clubhouse with their wives, who were sisters. An invitation to supper at the clubhouse was highly prized because Mrs. Clarence (Bessie) Besse, the club's cook, made a delicious clam chowder.

Catching trout was clearly a goal for Benson, and his log entries reveal his prodigious success. For example, on 7 April 1906, he and son George caught eighteen trout weighing a total of 8 pounds; in three days in 1907, Benson with Bela Pratt and Maurice Richardson caught seventy-seven trout; in 1909, in eight days of fishing, Benson with his wife and son caught 155 trout weighing 60 pounds, with the largest being 3 pounds, 6 ounces (this constituted an average of 19.4 trout per day, whereas other men fished seventy-five man-days and caught 667 trout, an average of 8.9 per day).

This record of Benson's catches becomes more amazing when one considers that the "law" of the Benson household was that everything caught or shot (except crows and gulls) must be eaten. Some explanation in defense of this lack of catch-and-release must be given: returning fish to be caught another day was not a common ethic in the early twentieth century and, most importantly, the club members paid to have trout stocked each year.

During his last years at the Tihonet Club, Benson fished less frequently. In 1939, at age seventy-seven, the logbook noted that he fished only three days (April 26 and 27, and May 19), keeping twenty-one fish and returning twenty-one. He noted on April 27: "Damn cold but it didn't quite snow."

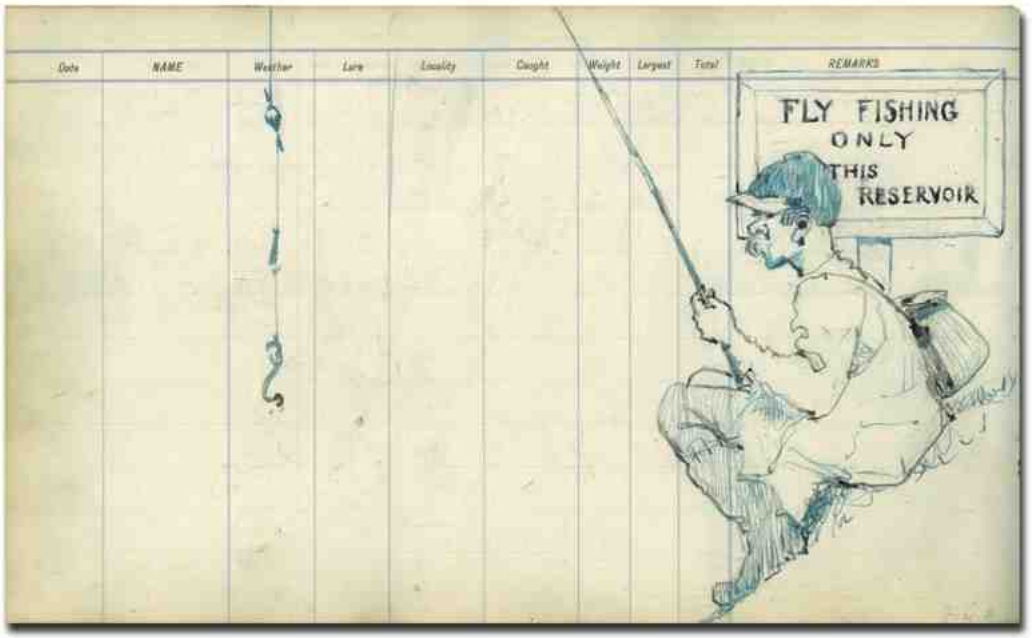


Figure 6. F. W. Benson, Tihonet Club logbook 1925. From the collection of the American Museum of Fly Fishing.

Figure 7. F. W. Benson, Tihonet Club logbook 1926. From the collection of the American Museum of Fly Fishing.

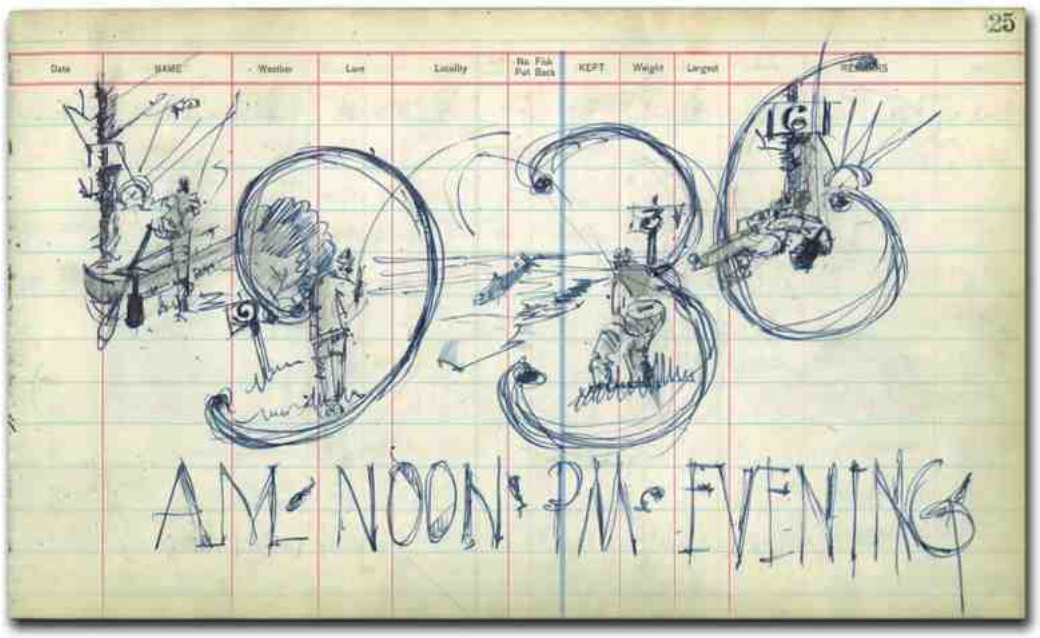


Figure 8. F. W. Benson, Tihonet Club logbook 1936. From the collection of the American Museum of Fly Fishing.

Figures 4 to 8 are sketches in annual logbooks by Benson. He and his artist friends sketched the first page of the logbooks from 1923 to 1937.

Figure 9 is a watercolor by Benson of a site on the Tihonet Club waters. On the back of the painting there is a note: "part of a Water Color by Frank W. Benson (which he tore up). Given 'To the Tihonet Club, 1944' by R. P. Bellows."

Deeply Personal Art

The rivers and streams with their rapids and boulders—together with mountains, shorelines, and forests, and especially the ever-changing light of the sky and shadows on the water—were Frank Benson's primary subjects. He was absorbed by the *places* that represented the nature he loved.

How can Benson's angling art best be characterized? He praised rivers and streams. He honored the men who lived on the water. He revered the experience of being outdoors in the nature he loved. It was a deeply personal art that revealed the places he was happiest, places where his art could be best expressed.

Endnotes

1. The information on Frank Benson's life described here is more fully elaborated in two books by Faith Andrews Bedford: *Frank W. Benson: American Impressionist* (New York: Rizzoli International Publications, Inc., 1994) and *The Sporting Art of Frank W. Benson* (Boston: David R. Godine, 2000).

2. Frank Benson to his daughter, Eleanor Benson Lawson. After she took up painting in 1929, she jotted down her father's criticisms and advice in a notebook, later turning these notes into a typewritten manuscript (Family Collection and Benson Papers, Peabody Essex Museum). Quoted in Faith Andrews Bedford, *The Sporting Art of Frank W. Benson,* 39.

3. Frank W. Benson fishing diaries, 1888–1909, Peabody Essex Museum, Phillips Library, Salem, Massachusetts.

4. The following information was taken from the Tihonet Club annual logbooks, which recorded the daily catch of each member and guest. The logs, along with art, maps, and books, were donated to the American Museum of Fly Fishing in 2006. Special thanks to Rip Cunningham for arranging the donation.

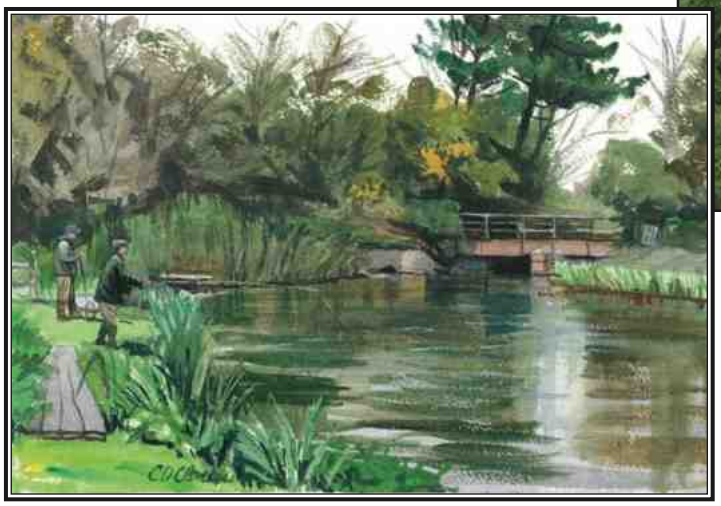
Figure 9. F. W. Benson, Untitled, *Tihonet Club location. From the collection of the American Museum of Fly Fishing.*

C. D. Clarke: Professional Sporting Artist

by John Mundt

John Mundt

C. D. Clarke



Above: C. D. Clarke painting on the bank of the River Test in Hampshire, England.

Left: The completed painting, The River Test, *at the Leckford Estate.*

Sporting art: its creation is a timeless tradition of capturing the essence of moments and places that stir our souls. From the cave paintings of ancient antiquity to the gallery of the American Museum of Fly Fishing today, art involving fish and game has always been an enriching part of the human experience. Museum member Christopher D. (C. D.) Clarke is one professional artist who carries on such traditions.

I had the pleasure of fishing with Clarke one afternoon last spring on a small trout stream in rural Connecticut. While we were walking together, he paused at an old abandoned bridge and stated that he would love to come back and paint it while the morning sun was rising on the other side. Naively, I asked how he could effectively capture such an image while painting directly from the streamside with the sun moving and the light and shadows shifting. "That's the key," he replied with a smile. "You've got to work quickly when the opportunity presents itself." *Immersion in the subject* and *spontaneous composition* are the terms he used. I also learned that once the essence of a scene has been generally captured in the field, an artist can complete the work under controlled conditions in the studio. The exchange reminded me that a studio is only a small part of the world for some artists.

Clarke's biography and travel diary are impressive. He was a painting and illustration major at Syracuse University and received his Bachelor of Fine Arts degree in 1981. Subsequent listings of exhibitions, collections, and reproductions for various magazines and book covers show the breadth of his efforts. Clarke's passion for the outdoors is clearly evident in his numerous works, and his passport includes stamps from sporting destinations across the world.

C. D. Clarke is a true keeper of the flame, and the heritage of our sport continues to be preserved and enriched by artists like him. For more information about C. D. Clarke's work, visit www.cdclarke.com.

A Presidential Collection

Above: Calvin Coolidge seated at his desk in the Oval Office, 15 August 1923. National Photo Company Collection, Library of Congress, LC-USZ62-93287.

Right: During his presidency (1923–1929), Coolidge spent several weeks vacationing and fishing during the summer months. Collection of the American Museum of Fly Fishing.

Our readers normally turn to our Gallery pages to read about an artifact or group of artifacts from the museum's permanent collection. Although we enjoy researching and writing about our collection, it is also important that we share our knowledge with other nonprofits that strive to learn about their own collections. Here we offer a glimpse into our recent collaborative work with the President Calvin Coolidge State Historic Site in Plymouth Notch, Vermont.

Calvin Coolidge

John Calvin Coolidge Jr., more commonly known as Calvin Coolidge, was born in Plymouth Notch, Vermont, in 1872. After completing his early schooling in Vermont and graduating from Black River Academy in Ludlow, Coolidge left the state to study at Amherst College in Amherst, Massachusetts, and chose to stay in that state to pursue his legal career, apprenticing at Hammond & Field in Northampton. By the close of the nineteenth century, Coolidge was emerging as a political figure in Northampton and would eventually serve as forty-eighth governor of Massachusetts (1919–1921).

Coolidge was elected vice president of the United States and began his term under President Warren G. Harding in 1921. While Coolidge was visiting family in Vermont during the late summer of 1923, Harding unexpectedly died. Coolidge was sworn into office as the thirtieth president of the United States by his father, John Coolidge, at the family farmstead during the early morning hours of August 3. (A second swearing-in ceremony was later held in Washington, D.C., because it was unclear if a Vermont notary public could officially inaugurate a president.)

The president grew up bait fishing but took up the sport of fly fishing during his presidency. His fishing mentor was Secret Service Chief Colonel Edmund W. Starling (1876–1944), an avid fly fisherman. According to Starling's memoir, he placed a bet that he could get the president to fly fish. After some instruction and a few outings with Starling, Coolidge was hooked. During the summer months, White House operations were set up at various locations (including Vermont, Wisconsin, New York, Massachusetts, and South Dakota), and the president was often photographed while fishing. Coolidge's fishing trips seeped into mainstream culture, as evidenced by the many political cartoons featuring the president fishing; in later years, mention of his fishing was included in a film set in the late 1920s, the movie adaptation of Norman Maclean's *A River Runs Through It.*

Alois Mayer

The President Calvin Coolidge State Historic Site in Plymouth Notch, Vermont, is a state-run site that interprets a late-nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century rural farming village. Calvin Coolidge's family home is part of the site. Courtesy of the Calvin Coolidge State Historic Site.

The President Calvin Coolidge State Historic Site

The President Calvin Coolidge State Historic Site is a multi-building complex that is preserved as the birthplace, boyhood home, and significant location of American history as it relates to President Calvin Coolidge. The site also interprets late-nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century rural farm life in Vermont through exhibitions and installations within some of the buildings.

This presidential site includes several buildings, many of which are open to the public: the home in which Coolidge was born; Coolidge's boyhood home and location of his 1923 swearing-in; the Farmer's Museum; Union Church, where Coolidge and his family attended services during his presidency; Plymouth Notch Cemetery, where seven generations of Coolidge family members are buried, including President Coolidge, his wife Grace, and his sons John and Calvin; a one-room schoolhouse; and the Plymouth Cheese Factory, an operating factory that was founded in 1890 by Coolidge's father and brought back into operation by President Coolidge's son John in the 1960s.

During the 1970s (and again in the 1990s), the site received a donation of a wooden packing crate full of Coolidge's fly-fishing equipment. The staff made note of the contribution and intended to catalog the collection after buildings were renovated and exhibitions were installed. In the fall of 2010, after successfully opening a new visitor center, the site's regional historic site administrator, Bill Jenney, contacted the American Museum of Fly Fishing for help with the identification of that fly-fishing collection. Yoshi Akiyama, deputy director, was called into service.

After several visits to the President Calvin Coolidge State Historic Site to unpack and identify the collection, Yoshi was able to witness firsthand the largest known fly-fishing collection belonging to President Calvin Coolidge. The collection includes several hundred trout flies, six bamboo rods, some leather fly boxes, and a few bait- and fly-casting reels. (Coolidge took a lot of flak from fly-fishing enthusiasts when he commented to the press that he would periodically use worms to catch trout.) None of the fly tiers can be identified, but it appears that some flies were store bought and some may have been tied specificially for the president. Two of the rods are identified as being made by Shakespeare and South Bend. Only one reel is identified as Shakespeare. The collection is modest and does not include equipment made by high-end manufacturers of the time; in many regards, the collection reflects the humility of the president referred to as "Silent Cal."

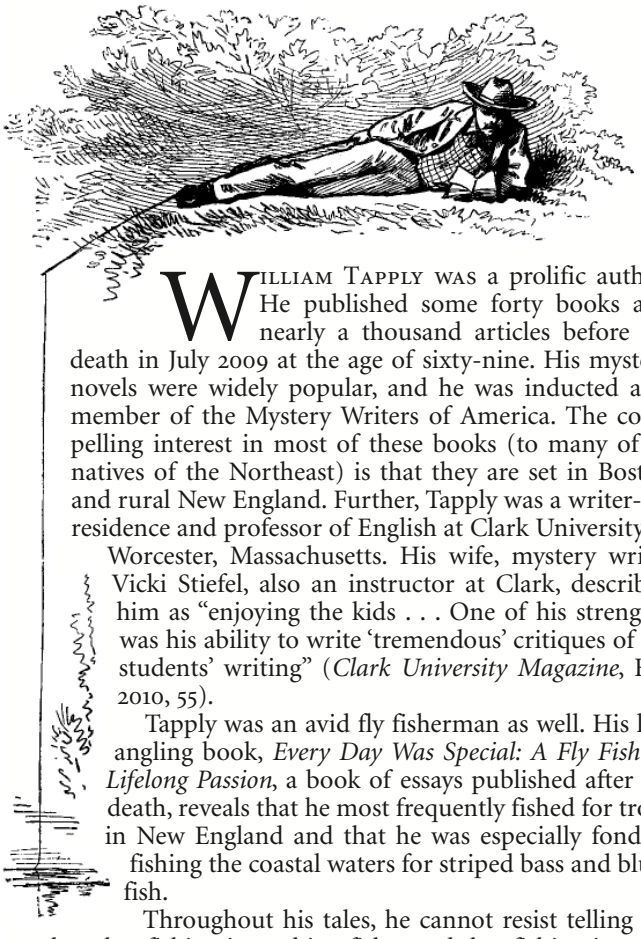
Yoshi will continue to work with the President Calvin Coolidge State Historic Site as they catalog, preserve, and exhibit this collection. The site plans to install a portion of the collection in its visitor center for summer 2011. You can visit their website at www.historicvermont.org/coolidge.

Cathi Comar
Executive Director

Yoshi Akiyama

The Coolidge collection includes several hundred fishing flies that were found in the packing crate. It is difficult to identify any of the fly tiers. Collection of the Calvin Coolidge State Historic Site.

Yoshi Akiyama



William Tapply was a prolific author. He published some forty books and nearly a thousand articles before his death in July 2009 at the age of sixty-nine. His mystery novels were widely popular, and he was inducted as a member of the Mystery Writers of America. The compelling interest in most of these books (to many of us natives of the Northeast) is that they are set in Boston and rural New England. Further, Tapply was a writer-in-residence and professor of English at Clark University in Worcester, Massachusetts. His wife, mystery writer Vicki Stiefel, also an instructor at Clark, described him as "enjoying the kids . . . One of his strengths was his ability to write 'tremendous' critiques of his students' writing" (*Clark University Magazine*, Fall 2010, 55).

Tapply was an avid fly fisherman as well. His last angling book, *Every Day Was Special: A Fly Fisher's Lifelong Passion*, a book of essays published after his death, reveals that he most frequently fished for trout in New England and that he was especially fond of fishing the coastal waters for striped bass and bluefish.

Throughout his tales, he cannot resist telling his readers that fishing is catching fish—and that fishing is more than catching fish:

> I love spontaneous excursions, those times when the air smells right and the urge to fish is irresistible no matter what other plans you might've had for that day. Annual trips are special because they come around the same time every year. You can count on them, anticipate them, prepare for them. Fishing the same waters at the same time each year, you collect memories and accumulate wisdom. (p. 29)

Tapply explains that his enthusiasm for the fly began as a youngster, under the tutelage of his famous father, "Tap" Tapply, who wrote the "Tap's Tips" and "Sportsman's Notebook" columns in *Field & Stream* for more than thirty years. He fished with his dad and Tap's fellow columnists Ed Zern and Corey Ford, as well as other writers, such as Lee Wulff, Harold Blaisdell, Burton Spiller, and Al McClane.

> My father was . . . well, he was my father. I probably took him for granted . . . I guess I took Corey Ford and Ed Zern and Lee Wulff for granted too. I saw them in their long johns. I lay awake in lakeside cabins listening to them snore, and I knew they sometimes got skunked . . . and went in over their waders—important lessons for a boy. These men were good to me. (p. 105)

Many of Tapply's mystery novels had fishing story lines, and in some, critical elements involved angling excursions. For example, his latest novels centered on Stoney Calhoun, who was a fishing guide and part owner of an angling store. Further, the stories in his novels and his fishing stories in *Every Day Was Special* reveal that he almost never fished alone; his companions were either friends or characters essential to the story. When one spends time reading Tapply's work, it is clear that his strength as a writer—and, indeed, as a person—was his love of camaraderie.

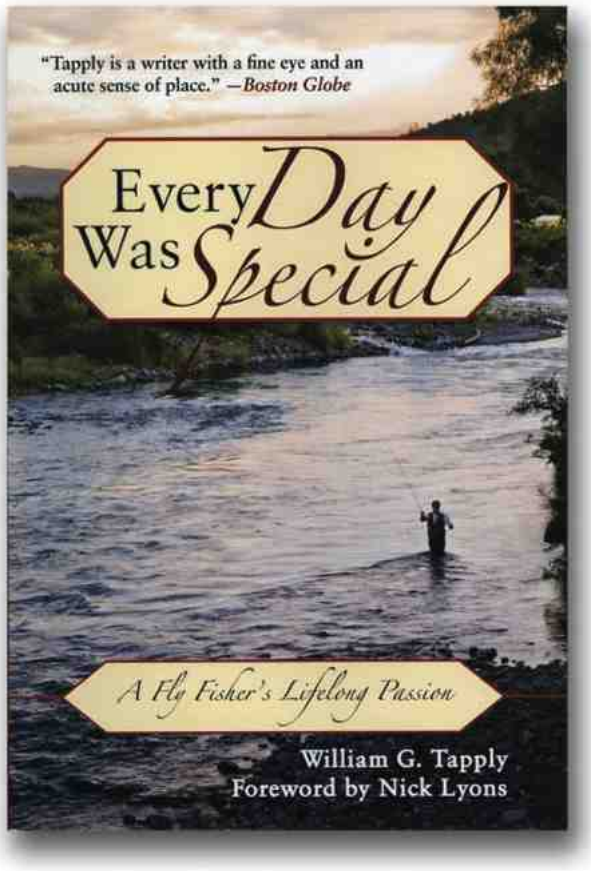
Every Day Was Special is a selection from his angling writings that covers many of the places he fished. It is rich with his ability to portray the personalities of his friends. These are not run-of-the-mill descriptions of fishing adventures. They are short stories, akin to his longer mystery novels, in which there is a plot leading the reader on a clear path to a conclusion.

Nick Lyons, in the foreword to Tapply's final angling book, cites a poignant remembrance by his wife Vicki (p. x): "My beloved Bill died last night. His passing was soft, and he was surrounded by myself and his five children. He will be missed."

William Tapply will be remembered by thousands of mystery fans for his original plots and clear, sensitive prose and by large number of fly-fishing readers who relish that rare combination of murder mystery with realistic fly fishing on streams, rivers, and oceans. I personally rank Tapply among the authors I enjoy most. This book, his last on fly fishing, is indeed its own memorial to him.

—Gerald Karaska

William G. Tapply
Every Day Was Special: A Fly Fisher's Lifelong Passion
New York: Skyhorse Publishing, 2010
186 pages
$26.95 (hardcover)



Museum News

Recent Donations

Enrique G. Gherardi of Rosario, Argentina, sent us a copy of Joe Brooks's article, "Midnight Salmon," from a 1958 issue of *Outdoor Life* magazine; a map of the Chimehuin Boca, Argentina; a handwritten letter from Jose E. "Babe" Anchorena; and three flies tied by Anchorena: a Green Highlander, a Black Doctor, and a Baron.

George Van Hook of Greenwich, New York, donated an original oil painting, *Late Summer on the Battenkill* (2010). **Derby Anderson** of Southport, Connecticut, gave us two original oil paintings by Stanley Meltzoff, *Drifting Blue* (1974) and *Three Permit and Crab* (1992).

Gardner Grant of Purchase, New York, donated a limited-edition canoe paddle. **Douglas Sakaguchi** of Orem, Utah, sent us a booklet by Richard Salmon, "Fly Fishing in Fresh Water."

Jeannine Dickey of Rangeley, Maine, donated two books, *Salmonia* by Sir Humphry Davy (John Murray, 1869) and *Armchair Adventures for the Angler*, edited by Charles K. Fox (A. S. Barnes & Co., 1970). **Mrs. Stanley Newhouse** donated a collection of forty books (for a detailed listing of this donation, please contact the museum).

In the Library

Thanks to the following for their donations of 2010 titles that have become part of our collection: Creel Press sent us David Beazley's *Images of Angling: Three Centuries of British Angling Prints*. Skyhorse Publishing sent us *The Best Fishing Stories Ever Told*, edited by Nick Lyons. And Frank Amato Publications, Inc., sent us Pierce Clegg and Peter McMullan's *Babine: A 50-Year Celebration of a World-Renowned Steelhead and Trout River* and Mike Rahtz's *The Secrets of St. Anthony's Creek: A Flyfisher's Manual.*

Kim Murphy

The museum rang in the holiday season with our annual Hooked on the Holidays event on December 5. Local visitors came to enjoy the seasonal refreshments and were able to paint a trout ornament, weave a paper snowflake, or even decorate holiday cutout cookies in trout shapes! Here, a family of visiting siblings and cousins show off their clown flies tied with Deputy Director Yoshi Akiyama.

Upcoming Events

May 19
Dinner and Auction
Chagrin Valley Hunt Club
Gates Mills, Ohio

May 24–26
Fishing outing to Blooming Grove Hunting and Fishing Club
Hawley, Pennsylvania

May
Gallery closes
During the month of May, the main gallery will be closed in order to install our newest exhibit. The Gardner L. Grant Library and gift shop will remain open and can be viewed free of charge.

June 11
New exhibit opening
A Graceful Rise: Women in Fly Fishing Yesterday, Today, and Tomorrow

June 11–12
A Graceful Rise symposiums
The American Museum of Fly Fishing
Manchester, Vermont

June 18
American Museum of Fly Fishing Tag Sale
On the museum lawn
Manchester, Vermont

July 16
Ice Cream Social
The American Museum of Fly Fishing
Manchester, Vermont

July 30
Angling and Art
Art auction
The American Museum of Fly Fishing
Manchester, Vermont

August 13
Fly-Fishing Festival
The American Museum of Fly Fishing
Manchester, Vermont

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

Sara Wilcox

It takes a village to raise a child, and it takes a community to maintain a museum! As a nonprofit institution, we rely on the generosity of not only members and donors who give monetarily, but also those individuals who are generous with their time or services. On December 9, the museum held a holiday reception in our library to honor volunteers and businesses of our local community who help or contribute in some way. Thanks to you and to all of our volunteers and contributors nationwide who help keep our organization vital and strong! Pictured here are Tom Becker (left) and Brad Knipes, who both put in many hours working on the various improvements to the museum's casting pond.

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To order, please contact Sarah Moore at (802)362-3300 or via e-mail at smoore@amff.com.

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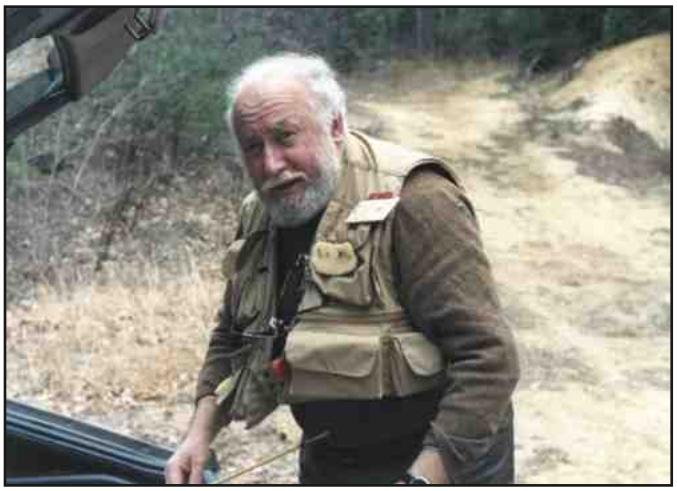
Lynda Fowler

G. William Fowler is an attorney from Odessa, Texas, who has made several trips to Hampshire in pursuit of chalk-stream trout. Here he is pictured between Fred Buller and Brian Clarke in front of Frederic M. Halford's Oakley Stream fishing hut during the Flyfishers' Club Mayfly Weekend (May 2005), which celebrated, in part, the hundredth anniversary of Halford's acquiring fishing rights at Mottisfont. Fowler is a frequent contributor to *Flyfishers Journal*, published by the Flyfishers' Club of London. His latest contribution to the *American Fly Fisher*, a book review of Brian Clarke's *The Stream*, appeared in the Summer 2005 issue.

Erwin Markowitz



Gerald Karaska is retired as professor of geography from Clark University. For many years he and his wife, Mary Claire, were volunteers in the museum's library. He continues to hobble along the banks of the trout streams of Massachusetts and Connecticut, often falling in the water, but plowing on. Jerry lives in Worcester, Massachusetts.

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The museum gratefully acknowledges the outstanding support of our 2010 donors. This year we have included the names of everyone who has contributed to our mission, including the attendees of our many fund-raising events. Please accept our apology if any name has been misspelled, placed under the incorrect contribution heading, or inadvertently excluded.

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Above: Gardner Grant was surprised at the 2010 annual membership meeting when the new sign for the Gardner L. Grant Library was revealed.

Left: The commemorative trustee name plaques are on display along the window frames in the Gardner L. Grant Library.

At the American Museum of Fly Fishing, we believe it is important to annually recognize all those who support our mission. This issue of our journal contains the names of the many people, organizations, and businesses that have contributed to our success in 2010. We truly appreciate all that you have done for us, and it is our intention to give you reasons to continue to support our institution.

It is also important that we recognize our museum trustees, past and present. The current list of our trustees can be found in the masthead of our journal; these are the women and men who volunteer their time and resources to help make this museum accessible, interesting, and relevant. Since our founding in 1968, we have had dozens of trustees retire from our board, and we made a special effort in 2010 to engrave and install name and date plaques for each past trustee. A special plaque was also created to commemorate the women and men who combined forces to found the museum. All of these names are on display in our library, and as a trustee retires, a plaque with his or her name will be added.

And speaking of trustees, one of our longest-serving board members has decided to hang up his trustee hat. After thirty-six years of service, Gardner Grant will keep an eye on things from the sidelines as trustee emeritus. During Gardner's tenure—and while dedicating time as president, then chairman of the board—he helped to usher in the growth of our institution with the publication of this journal, the move into our first building, the expansion of the permanent-collection holdings, the change of the museum's name to reflect its mission, the creation of the popular exhibition *Anglers' All*, and the increased diversity of the board. To show our appreciation, the library has been named in his honor. The Gardner L. Grant Library, under its new name, will continue to thrive as a resource for the fly-fishing community.

Thank you, Gardner, and all of our trustees, past and present, for your devotion and commitment.

Cathi Comar
Executive Director

The American Museum of Fly Fishing

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The American Museum of Fly Fishing, a nationally accredited, nonprofit, educational institution dedicated to preserving the rich heritage of fly fishing, was founded in Manchester, Vermont, in 1968. The museum serves as a repository for and conservator to the world's largest collection of angling and angling-related objects. The museum's collections, exhibitions, and public programs provide documentation of the evolution of fly fishing as a sport, art form, craft, and industry in the United States and abroad from its origins to the present. Rods, reels, flies, tackle, art, books, manuscripts, and photographs form the basis of the museum's collections.

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

Volunteer!

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

Join!

Membership Dues (per annum)

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

Support!

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