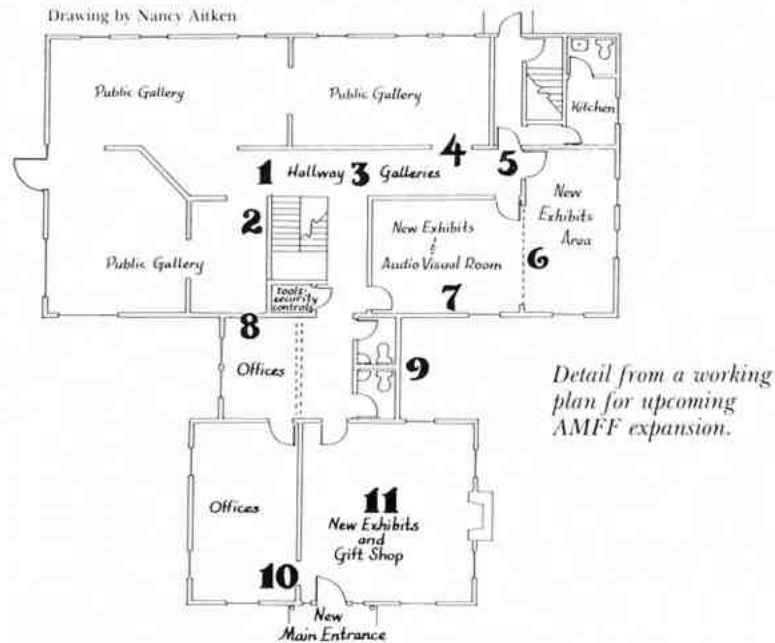


# The American Fly Fisher

SPRING 1990

VOLUME 16 NUMBER 1



## New Priorities



ON DECEMBER 5, 1989, twenty-three of the Museum's trustees met at the St. Francis Yacht Club in San Francisco for AMFF's annual business meeting, where the mood was upbeat and enthusiastic. I suspect that all who attended the meeting felt we had turned a corner and were ready to embark on an exhilarating period of growth and increased professionalism at the Museum.

We have provided our readers with some of the highlights of the meeting in the "Museum News" section of this issue, but one item of special significance has emerged. It was resolved that AMFF would expand its Manchester facilities and generally make the Museum a more interesting and attractive place to visit. This means that we intend to renovate and expand the Museum's interior spaces in order to create additional public exhibition areas, an audio/visual room, a "Touch and Feel" area for our young visitors, and more. Does this mean that AMFF is cutting back on its traveling exhibits program? Not at all; in fact, now that we have a new professional curator, we feel that we will probably expand the program. We sent nine

exhibits to museums and outdoor exhibitions around the country last year, and I expect that we may well surpass that total by mid-summer 1990. Our commitment of taking the Museum to people across the country remains as strong as ever.

In order to make this program of expansion a reality, we formed an energetic and motivated Development Committee in San Francisco. This committee met in Boston on February 8, 1990, where it was resolved that it would "Plan, organize, implement and successfully complete a capital drive to fund the proposed renovation of the Museum . . ." Consequently, "The Campaign for the American Museum of Fly Fishing: Preserving A Rich Heritage For Future Generations" will be launched in the coming months. Our goal is a fully computerized, professionally managed educational institution that is capable of addressing the needs and expectations of a growing and sophisticated audience. We feel this goal is attainable, for the leadership of this museum is strong and vitally aware of the challenges it faces as we move into a new decade.

D.S.J.



The  
American  
Museum of  
Fly Fishing

Preserving a Rich Heritage  
for Future Generations

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# The American Fly Fisher

Journal of The American Museum of Fly Fishing

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ON THE COVER:

*The richness of the collections of the American Museum of Fly Fishing are reflected in these 19th and 20th century American reels, part of the 800-plus reels held by the Museum. Photograph by Bob O'Shaughnessy, Exposure Place Ltd., Boston, MA.*

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# 19th Century American Reels from *A Treasury of Reels* by Jim Brown



Frankly, I knew next to nothing about fly reels before joining the staff of the American Museum of Fly Fishing in 1987. The purpose or function of a fly reel? Why, just to hold line, of course. Or so I thought at the time. Then I learned that far from a minor actor, a reel serves a number of functions, not the least of which is that of an active partner to the rod and the angler in fighting a fish once it's been hooked. I learned, too, that reels are designed for use on specific game fish, both fresh- and salt-water varieties, and for use under specific conditions. This explained the hundreds of types and models in existence.

Once at the Museum, I was literally sur-

rounded by fly reels, and early on I catalogued quite a few: the old and the new, the glittering members of the aristocracy, and those humble reels of uncertain pedigree. I soon came to think of the Museum's reels as our crown jewels, for there are probably no other objects in our collections that lend themselves so well to display.

Frequent questions from Museum visitors prompted me to survey the literature on the subject, and I found the writing of reel experts such as John Orrelle, David Beazley, and Steven Vernon to be pleasurable as well as enlightening. And then I discovered the writing of another authority, Jim Brown. Jim had already published a superb little gem of a book entitled *Fishing Reel Patents of the*

*United States, 1838-1940*, and was just finishing another, *A Treasury of Reels*. Both Jim's book and manuscript were often used in-house by our staff as important reference tools. But that manuscript was something very special, and it was clear that once published, this was going to be a book to be reckoned with, for not only had Jim written a brilliant history of the fly reel, he had also completed the herculean task of compiling museum-catalog entries on all of the 800-plus reels in AMFF's collection.

We are pleased to publish herein selected excerpts on the early history of American fly reels from Jim Brown's *A Treasury of Reels*.

D.S.J.

DURING THE EARLY PART of the nineteenth century there is very little indigenous American literature on angling. One of the earliest and most useful volumes from this period is Jerome V.C. Smith's *Natural History of the Fishes of Massachusetts* (1833), which includes a long essay entitled "Trout, Interspersed with Remarks on the Theory and Practice of Angling."

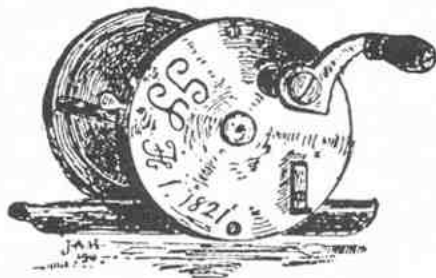
In this essay Smith describes the trout tackle in use at the time, which includes a twelve-and-a-half-foot hickory fly rod of thirteen to fourteen ounces and a multiplying reel carrying about thirty yards of woven silk and hair line. For a larger fish, such as the landlocked salmon of Maine's Sebago Lake, a stout salmon rod is recommended along with a single-action brass reel capable of holding eighty to a hundred yards of line. We get the impression that fly-fishing for trout was well established in the 1830s, but that salmon fishing with the fly was still something of a novelty in America.<sup>1</sup>

Surprisingly, Smith also describes fly-fishing for sea trout (sea-run brook trout—the brown trout was not yet introduced) and the occasional striped bass in the Cape Cod estuaries near the Child's and Mashpee rivers. This appears to be one of the earliest references to saltwater fly-fishing, and as Smith makes no claim for being the originator, it seems likely that the sport of saltwater fly-fishing predates him. A team of bright and showy flies was used, a red fly being particularly effective. Sometimes flies were used in combination with bait.<sup>2</sup>

Certainly reels were being made in America at this time. While there is some understandable skepticism, as we have noted earlier, regarding Dr. James Henshall's opinion that George Snyder of Paris, Kentucky, made the "first multiplying reel in the world" in 1810, there seems good reason to believe that Snyder's Clay reel, engraved "G.S. Feb 1, 1821," is authentic—and further, that New York reelmakers were also active during the same period. In the collection

of the American Museum of Fly Fishing, for example, is a New York-style salmon or saltwater reel engraved "G. C. Furman made 1826 Rebuilt 1838." In general, though, it was not until the late 1830s that commercial reelmaking began in America on a significant scale. This seems to have taken place nearly simultaneously in the North and in the South and to have resulted in the development of two distinctive styles of reels, known respectively as the New York reel and the Kentucky reel.

The United States continued to import much of its fishing tackle during this period. In 1830, for instance, only two individuals are listed in the fishing-tackle trade in New York City, as far as I can determine: Thomas W. Horsfield, at 40 Fulton Street, and John Lentner, at 39 Nassau Street. John Conroy, who claimed to be established by 1830, is not explicitly listed in the fishing-tackle trade in local directories until 1838: although he is listed as a machinist as early as 1825. Likewise, T. and J. Bate (the forerunners of William Mills and Son) who advertised that they were established by 1822, are not listed in New York City directories until 1832, and their listings indicate they were principally importing needles at this time.<sup>3</sup> Writing in 1833, Smith notes that the most knowledgeable fly fishermen "import the best tackle from England, for it is not to be bought in all its variety in this country."<sup>4</sup>



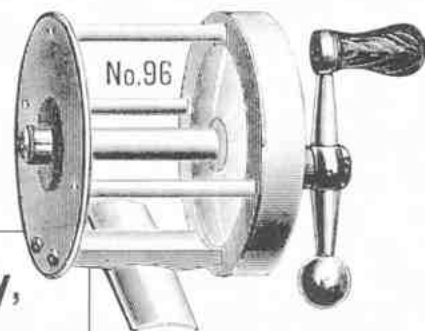
"Snyder's Clay Reel" from James A. Henshall's *Book of the Black Bass* (Robert Clarke Company: Cincinnati, 1904).

## THE NEW YORK REEL

The New York reel is a large brass or German-silver saltwater reel capable of holding a hundred to three hundred yards of heavy cotton line and usually measuring about two and a half inches to four and a half inches in diameter. It was typically a double multiplier with a balance handle. In its earliest form it had neither a click nor drag mechanism, but was sometimes fitted with a leather thumb pad that the angler could use to apply pressure to a running fish. Its principle use was for casting squid and cut bait to striped bass along the Atlantic coast.

The balance handles on these reels were at first straight and dowel-like in appearance, having on one end a pear-shaped knob of rosewood or walnut and on the opposite end a ball-shaped counterweight. For this reason they are now sometimes referred to by collectors as simply *ball-handle reels*. Later, balance handles were often serpentine or S-shaped, with flattened counterweights and black hard-rubber knobs. The chief purpose of the balance handle seems to have been that it permitted longer casts by contributing to spoon momentum. It may also have resulted in more even pivot wear.

No one knows who first originated the idea of the counterbalanced handle, or even if it was a British or American invention, but John Conroy, of New York City, clearly did the most to popularize its use. Conroy's 1838 advertisement in the *Spirit of the Times* for his "multiplying reels with balanced cranks" is the earliest written reference to counterbalanced handles that is known.<sup>5</sup> Similarly, Edward Vom Hofe, also of New York City, probably cannot be credited as the in-



Above: This Conroy Multiplying Reel with balanced crank was advertised in the "Illustrated Catalogue of Fine Fishing Tackle manufactured by Abbie & Imbrie" (New York, 1882).

Opposite: An assemblage of 19th and 20th century reels from the collections of the American Museum of Fly Fishing. Photograph courtesy Bob O'Shaughnessy, Exposure Place Ltd., Boston, MA.

Right: Thomas J. Conroy, a descendant of John Conroy who popularized the use of the counterbalanced reel handle in the 1830s, was still selling "Fine Fishing Tackle" in the early 1890s. This advertisement appeared in the July 19, 1890 issue of *The American Angler*.

**Thomas J. Conroy,**  
65 Fulton Street, New York,

TRADE MARK

Fine Fishing Tackle  
AND  
CAMPING GOODS.

My New Illustrated Retail Catalogue and Handbook for Sportsmen, containing Hints and Directions for Fishing and Outing, is now ready. Price 25 cents. Customers may deduct amount paid for catalogue from their first purchase if it amounts to \$1.00 or more.

ESTABLISHED 1830.

ventor of the S-shaped counterbalanced handle, but it is a style he is often identified with, for he used it almost without exception on all his reels throughout a long career.

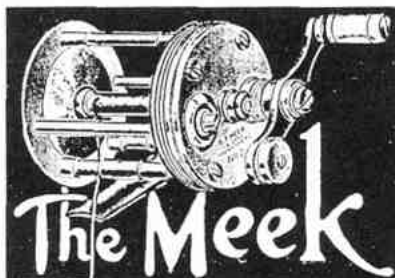
An oil painting in the Toledo Museum of Art by Junius Brutus Stearns, dated 1853 and entitled "Still Life with Trout and Fishing Tackle," shows a good catch of brook trout next to a rod with New York reel, fly book, and flies. We can probably assume that the New York reel was used for freshwater fishing, including fly-casting, prior to Stearns's painting, but New York reel-smiths were required to adapt their standard product for this use.

First, New York reels were too large and heavy for most freshwater fishing, so it was necessary to scale them down in size. Models measuring a mere two inches in diameter—sometimes less—were introduced. Second, the offset handle of the New York multipliers was probably an inconvenience to many fly fishers. This was less of a problem in bait-casting, where a weighted bait was cast from and retrieved directly to the reel, but in fly-fishing it is the weight of the line that is cast, and loose coils of line are often held by the angler both preparatory to casting and after retrieving. As most fly fishermen have learned, a loose loop of fly line has an almost uncanny tendency to tangle on any projection near at hand, including prominent reel handles. This may account for some of the single-action New York ball-handle reels, in which the handle is mounted at the center of the sideplate, where it is less inclined to be in the way. These are usually smaller-size reels, and it seems likely that they were made with the fly fisher in mind.

#### THE KENTUCKY REEL

The Kentucky reel, on the other hand, was originally designed for freshwater use. It is typically a quadruple multiplier with a crank handle, made of brass or German silver, averaging about two inches or less in diameter, and capable of holding about eighty yards of fine, braided silk line. These reels were probably first used to cast minnows for black bass in the streams near Frankfort, Kentucky, where J. F. and B. F. Meek established a reelmaking firm in 1839.<sup>8</sup> Soon, larger models with the capacity for heavier linen lines were added for lake and saltwater use; smaller models, terminating with the tiny model no. 1, measuring one and five-eighths inches in diameter, were produced for trout anglers and fly fishermen. Not long afterward, Benjamin C. Milam, operating under the Meek and Milam mark, extended the size range of Kentucky reels even further by introducing the ultra-small

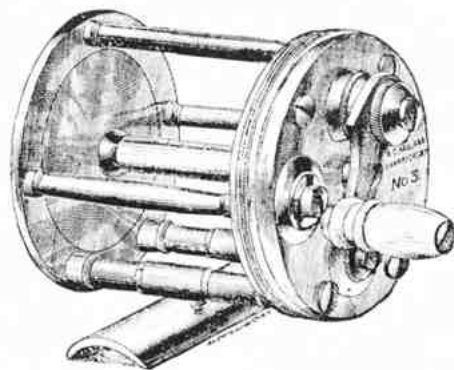
*Below: Detail from a B. F. Meek & Sons advertisement which appeared in the June, 1916, issue of Field & Stream. Right: An American classic, a "Frankfort Reel," produced by Benjamin C. Milam of Frankfort, Kentucky, from James A. Henshall's Book of the Black Bass (Robert Clarke Company: Cincinnati, 1881).*



models o and oo, which were one and a half inches and one and a quarter inches in diameter respectively. While Kentucky reelmakers were not generally known for the manufacture of single-action reels, at least one maker, J.L. Sage of Lexington, Kentucky, is believed to have built a click reel for black bass fly-fishing as early as 1848.<sup>7</sup>

Our understanding of the early history of Kentucky reels rests heavily on an article first published by Dr. James Henshall in the December 1900 issue of *Outing* magazine, entitled "Evolution of the Kentucky Reel."<sup>8</sup> This study was republished in the 1904 and 1923 revised editions of his *Book of the Black Bass* and has been reprinted numerous times since. In addition to providing much useful background about the early Kentucky reelmakers, Henshall attributes a variety of inventions to this school, including the jeweled bearings and compensating pivot caps of George Snyder, the protected crankshaft (i.e., having a collar) and sliding click and drag buttons of J. F. Meek, and the use of spiral or helical gearing by B.F. Meek. Unfortunately, it is difficult to authenticate these advances precisely, as most of the early Kentucky reelmakers did not patent their inventions.

Dr. Henshall was an obdurate holder of an opinion once he had expressed it. He never did fully retract his contention that George Snyder invented the multiplying reel, even though evidence to the contrary became available to him in his later years.<sup>9</sup> He was also steadfastly opposed to counterbalanced handles throughout his writing. He was not alone in this. The influential George Washington Bethune, who edited the first American edition of Walton's *Complete Angler* in 1847, also recommended:



ESTABLISHED 1834.  
**THE MILAM,**  
OR  
 Genuine Frankfort, Ky., Fishing Reel  
 Manufactured by B. C. MILAM & SON, Frankfort, Ky.  
 Catalogue free. Send for one.

*A period B.C. Milam & Son advertisement which appeared in The American Angler on Saturday, July 19, 1890.*

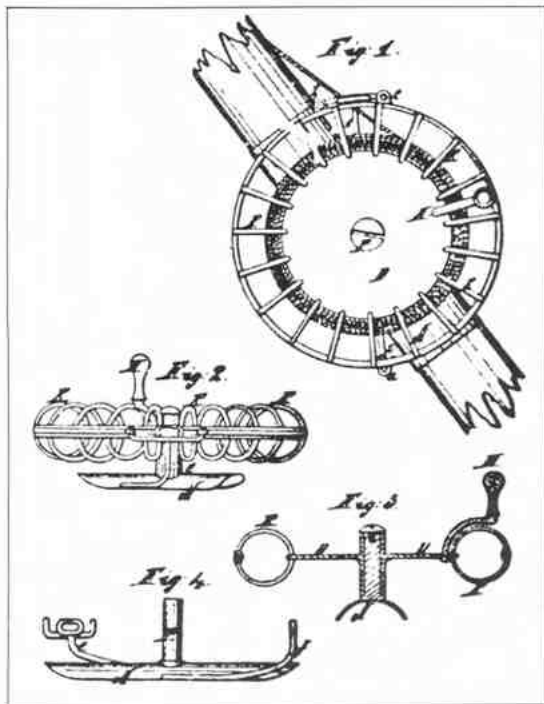
Let your reel be not too large and a multiplier, without a check or balance to the crank, for the first will annoy you besides being of no use, and the last make your reel turn faster than you think.<sup>10</sup>

But Henshall was particularly vociferous in denouncing the counterbalanced handle:

The balanced-handle is a delusion and a snare. There is no real advantage in it. In so light a piece of machinery as a fishing reel, a *balance handle* adds *nothing* to its efficiency, while it is open to several objections, the most serious of which is the greater possibility of fouling the line as compared with the simple crank-handle. It is popularly supposed to aid in the smooth and rapid revolution of the spool; but if the reel is constructed in a workmanlike manner, such aid is reduced to a minimum. It is one of those theories that is not borne out in practice. It was never designed by a practical angler.<sup>11</sup>

Examining a group of New York and Kentucky reels, one can hardly fail to notice the comparative simplicity, even primitiveness of the former. This has led some collectors to draw the conclusion that New York reels are generally older than Kentucky reels and may in some way have served as prototypes for early Kentucky reel-smiths. I tend to doubt this conclusion. It seems to me that each style developed independently and at about the same time from a common ancestor, the British multiplier.

The British multiplier of the 1830s was typically a small brass treble multiplier used for trout fishing. New York reel-smiths reduced the gear ratio to 2:1 and built a multiplier that was generally larger and more rugged for saltwater



Several detailed figures from William Billingham's "Fishing-Reel" patent of August 9, 1859. (United States Patent Office, Letters Patent No. 24,987.)

goods to keep the peace with local suppliers, for he was also a proprietor of The Angler's Depot, a well-equipped fishing-tackle shop at 103 Fulton Street in New York City. But reading between the lines, it seems clear that American multipliers, both New York and Kentucky, had mostly superseded the old-fashioned British multiplier by this time. American manufacturers were still lagging behind, however, in the production of light single-action reels that would have been most suitable for the fly fisher.

During the 1850s, American fly fishers may have used small New York or Kentucky reels, or they could have used British single-action reels, including the popular Birminghams or the more expensive raised-check-plate reels. Although it is probable that Conroy (and perhaps other New York makers) was duplicating these British single-action reels, many feel that credit for the first American fly reel design belongs to William Billingham.

#### WILLIAM BILLINGHURST

William Billingham (1807 to 1880) was one of the most famous gunsmiths of his day. From the late 1840s to about the time of the Civil War, Billingham produced muzzle-loading rifles from a large shop in Rochester, New York, which employed as many as eight or nine men. Following the Civil War, when competition from factory-made arms gradually began to force many of the country's smaller gunsmiths out of business, Billingham was able to continue operations, based on a fine reputation—particularly for his target rifles and also as the manufacturer of the Billingham fishing reel.

Billingham's reel was patented on August 9, 1859 (pat. no. 24,987). His first reels were made of brass wire and castings, assembled in such a manner as to allow air to dry the silk fly lines that were in use at the time. Their unique appearance has prompted some collectors to refer to them as *birdcage* reels. Billingham's design featured a folding handle that allowed the reel to be carried in the angler's pocket or kit. By the 1870s, Billingham was nickel plating some of his reels. He also produced a limited number of nickel-silver models that commanded a higher price and were sometimes offered as prizes in casting tournaments. His reels were stamped with a neat circular mark that read: "Billingham's patent, Rochester, N.Y. 1859 Aug 9." In August 1873, Billing-

hurst renewed his patent (this was permitted in the early years of the patent system); reels built from this date until 1880 bear the renewal date in addition to the standard markings. The 1873 date has tended to confuse collectors, as it is often crudely stamped and is easy to misread as 1878 or 1879.

The Billingham reel was the fourth fishing reel patented in the United States and the first American single-action reel to receive a patent that could be used by the fly fisher. The first American fishing-reel patent was granted to Arunah Tiffany of Gibson, Pennsylvania, who received U.S. patent no. 354 on July 26, 1838. It resembled an elaborate cleat, with rollers, to be attached to a boat or dock where heavy lines or nets might fray without a friction-reducing device. The next two patents, John A. Baily, of Jersey City, New Jersey, August 5, 1856, no. 15,446, and Edward Deacon, of Brooklyn, New York, February 10, 1857, no. 16,626, were New York balance-handle reels that were both assigned to John Warrin of New York City.<sup>13</sup>

Billingham was fully aware of the reels on the market at the time he introduced his design, and he was not shy about pointing out the competition's shortcomings. His patent describes multiplying reels as heavy, bulky, overcomplicated, and expensive to manufacture. His reel, on the other hand, had none of these disadvantages, and it recovered line as rapidly as a multiplier and more rapidly than other single-action reels:

Another important feature consists in the rapidity with which the line can be wound, thus enabling us to dispense with complicated and expensive gearing for that purpose. In the common form of reel, without gearing, each turn of the handle does not at first take up more than three-quarters of an inch of line. In a reel of the same size as that shown in the drawings hereto annexed the first turn of the handle takes up more than seven inches of line, or nearly ten times the amount taken up by one turn of the common reel-handle.<sup>14</sup>

The majority of Birmingham reels (all, as far as I know) had narrow-diameter spindles, which meant that the initial recovery of line was very slow. Billingham's reel, with its much wider core, may have been the first to correct this problem. It is also possible that Billingham was the first to introduce the concept of extra ventilation for reels. It seems incredible that the Birmingham reel, which had been manufactured for twenty-five years or more prior to the Billingham patent, did not incorporate sideplate perforations into a few models, but this seems to be the case—at least I have not encountered any reels of this type that can be positively dated as pre-1860.

But the unique feature of Billing-

fishing, Kentucky reelmakers, by contrast, continued to use the smaller reel for freshwater fishing but increased the gear ratio to 4:1, which enabled a quick and effortless retrieve of the bait. The earliest New York reelmakers were machinists and mechanics, and their reels have an almost industrial spareness. Perhaps, too, many of these early New York reels were used by commercial fishermen rather than sportsmen—under such circumstances, dependability and affordability would have far outweighed aesthetic considerations. The earliest Kentucky reelmakers were frequently jewelers or watchmakers, and their appreciation for highly detailed and ornamented work was soon incorporated into their reels. This gave their reels a sophisticated, artistic look that is generally absent from the majority of New York reels.

#### AMERICAN REELS AT MID-CENTURY

By the middle of the nineteenth century, the number of American sportsmen and the size of the American tackle trade had increased substantially. In the *American Anglers Guide*, John J. Brown notes that, although the majority of light trout and perch reels holding from twenty to fifty yards of line are still usually imported from England, "The reels used in bass or salmon fishing are manufactured altogether in this country" and "... with the exception of artificial Baits, all articles of tackle made in this country are equal, if not superior to those in England."<sup>12</sup> Brown may have been exaggerating the high quality of American

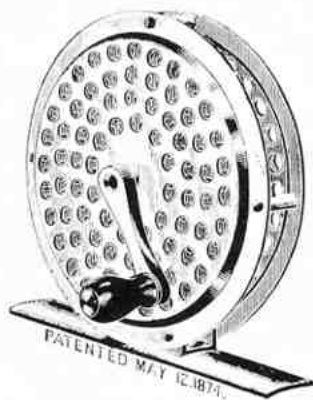
hurst's reel is that it is mounted on its side rather than upright, as were most conventional fly reels. Why Billinghamurst decided to break with tradition in this way is a mystery, but we do know that his was the first in a long line of side-mount designs that became very popular in America during the late nineteenth century. Alonzo Fowler, Charles Clinton, Albert Pettingill, August Meisselbach, and Elmer Sellers are only a few of the American reelmakers who fell under Billinghamurst's influence and produced side-mount fly reels. Strangely enough, this style of reel never found favor in Britain.<sup>15</sup>

The Billinghamurst was never really known as a free-running reel. It was certainly no match for a New York or Kentucky multiplier when casting directly from the reel, yet American fly fishers of the 1860s and 1870s found that it met their need for a lightweight and ventilated single-action reel that was narrow enough to take up line quickly. These features in combination helped to establish it as America's first fly-reel design. Even so, the side-mount fly reels, which evolved from the Billinghamurst, slowly lost their commercial appeal toward the end of the nineteenth century, and the horizontally mounted fly reel survives today only in the modern automatic. The growing preference for conventionally mounted fly reels can be attributed at least in part to the introduction and immense popularity of the Orvis-patent reel.

#### THE ORVIS 1874 PATENT REEL

Most tackle collectors recognize the Orvis 1874 trout reel immediately. Its highly perforated sideplates and extremely narrow spool are not easily mistaken, even from a distance. Patented by Charles F. Orvis of Manchester, Vermont, on May 12, 1874, this reel was marketed until about 1915—period of some forty years. The Orvis reel may not be the first American fly reel, but it was one of the most popular, and it is now widely recognized as a benchmark of American reel design. It is often referred to as the first *modern* American fly reel, because in addition to being narrow and ventilated, it was an upright or conventionally mounted reel. As one writer aptly puts it: "if the Billinghamurst reel is considered the 'grandfather' of fly reels, the Orvis reel would certainly represent the 'father.'"<sup>16</sup>

The earliest Orvis trout reels were made of nickel silver, had no click, and were signed on the bottom of the foot with hand-engraved markings that read: "C.F. Orvis maker Manchester, Vt. patented May 12, 1874." There was no signature cap on the back of the first model,



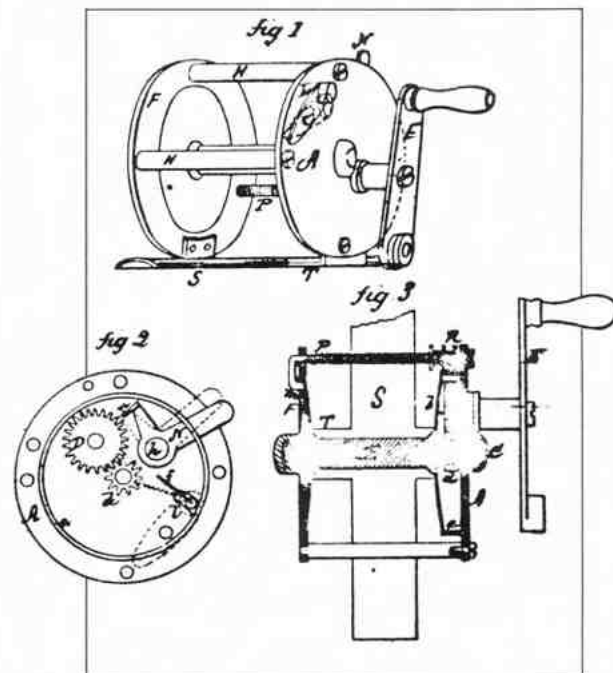
The famed Orvis 1874 Patent Reel as it appeared in a circa 1885 C. F. Orvis Company catalog.

and the spindle, which was hollow, was clearly visible on the backplate. The spindle was extra-perforated (not just a single perforation for line tie), which according to the theory of the patent, allowed moisture from the line to seep into the core of the spindle and exit through the opening in the backplate. This idea sounded better than it worked in practice, however, and this feature was dropped in subsequent versions of the design.

The first model of an Orvis reel was solidly riveted together, although the crank handle was removable, as it was on all the Orvis-patent reels. It came in a handsome black-walnut case with a hinged lid and sold for \$5 in 1875. In order to remain competitive on the tackle market of the late nineteenth century, the price of the Orvis reel was gradually reduced, and a cardboard box was substituted for the original hardwood case. The reel was made of nickel-plated brass and a click was added. The Orvis design underwent a continual development, which resulted in a number of distinct models. Chief among these was a wider version for bass fishing, but there were a variety of more subtle alterations that have also been identified by collectors.<sup>17</sup> It is believed that all the 1874 patent reels were built for Orvis by Manhattan Brass and Manufacturing Company of New York City.

#### SILAS TERRY AND JAMES J. ROSS

The Orvis 1874 patent reel was not the first upright American fly-reel design. It was preceded by James J. Ross's patent of October 12, 1869 (no. 95,839), and Silas Terry's patent of November 14, 1871 (no. 121,020). Neither reel ever seriously



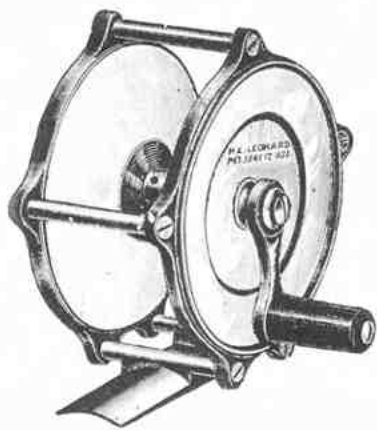
Detailed figures from Silas B. Terry's "Improvement in Fishing Reels" patent of November 14, 1871. (United States Patent Office, Letters Patent, No. 121,020).

challenged the Orvis reel in popularity, and both have tended to be overlooked by historians. To begin with, the patent drawings for the Ross and Terry reels are misleading. In the case of Ross's patent, the drawing shows a long-spooled reel that looks more like a casting reel than a fly reel. In Terry's patent, his improvements are shown on a multiplier. Terry advertised single-action reels as early as 1872.<sup>18</sup> His single-action reels were very conventional products in the Birmingham style: crank-handle reels that were narrow but had solid, unperforated sideplates. They all featured his distinctive sheet-metal foot, which is usually stamped with the 1871 patent date.

Ross's 1869 patent reel was just as revolutionary as the Terry reel was conservative. Unfortunately, its rarity has helped to obscure this fact and its importance generally, as historians and collectors alike have usually assumed that it was never made or was made in such limited numbers that none survived. Recently, however, an example of Ross's reel was discovered. This reel is an upright, single-action reel with narrow spool and ventilated sideplates—features which in combination were thought to have been first introduced by the Orvis 1874 patent reel. Ross's reel is believed to have been built for a short time, between 1869 and 1871.<sup>19</sup>

The Ross-patent reel also exhibits a unique spool in which the arbor was





*This period advertisement for H.L. Leonard's Patent Click Reel with raised pillars appeared in an early William Mills & Son catalog.*

built of a series of rods that connect the front and back spool walls. This provided a large core that encouraged adequate ventilation of the line and enabled a quick retrieve. This idea, a good one, was copied by Julius Vom Hofe, August Meisselbach, and many other reelmakers during the late 1800s when Ross's patent expired.

Finally, the Ross reel is a raised-pillar design. This means that the cross bars—or pillars—which hold the reel together, are raised above the round sideplates (in this case, these are the spool walls). The advantage of this arrangement is that it creates a comparatively lightweight reel of small diameter that can carry the maximum amount of line. Many collectors, unaware of the Ross patent, have assumed that the Leonard reel patented by Francis J. Philbrook in 1877 was the first American raised-pillar design. In fact, neither Ross nor Philbrook claimed raised pillars as their invention, which may suggest that this style of reel was already being built prior to their efforts.<sup>20</sup>

Given the brief production period and the rarity of the Ross reel, we can probably safely assume that this reel was not exactly a stunning commercial success. James Ross returned to a career in carpentry, and only in his later years did he attain some modest degree of prosperity as the superintendent of the Ross-patent refrigerator company.

#### H. L. LEONARD AND THE RAISED-PILLAR REEL

Things were different for Hiram Leonard (1831 to 1907). He gained worldwide and lasting fame as one of the finest rod-builders of his time.<sup>21</sup> Leonard began rodmaking in the early 1870s, at first in

addition to his gunsmith business and soon thereafter on a full-time basis. Working in Bangor, Maine, he established marketing ties with Bradford and Anthony of Boston, then later with Abbey and Imbrie of New York City. By 1877 Leonard took on a partner, James H. Kidder, who ran a retail outlet for Leonard's products at 19 Beaver Street in New York City. But this arrangement did not work out, and in the following year Kidder sold his interest in Leonard's business to William Mills and Son, also of New York City. In 1881 Hiram Leonard moved his shop from Bangor to Central Valley, New York, where he established the Leonard Rod Company. Mills eventually became sole owner of the Leonard Rod Company and remained so until 1973. The company had several owners during the 1970s and 1980s, but it was finally dissolved in 1985. Throughout its history, the Leonard Rod Company was known for premium-grade split-bamboo fly rods, and the Leonard name on almost any item of fishing tackle became synonymous with top quality.

The Leonard raised-pillar reel was patented by Francis J. Philbrook on June 12, 1877 (no. 191,813), and the rights were assigned to Hiram Leonard at the time the patent was granted. As an accomplished gunsmith, Leonard certainly possessed the skills to fabricate the raised-pillar reel himself, but the available evidence suggests that the earliest reels were built by Philbrook, in partnership with Edward F. Payne. Unfortunately, there are no directory listings for the years 1877 to 1878 to fully substantiate this conclusion, but Bangor city directories list the firm of Philbrook and Payne from 1879 to 1884, first giving their trade as "fishing rod trimmings" and later as makers of "fishing reels." It seems probable that Philbrook and Payne were supplying the raised-pillar reel to Leonard. By 1900, or perhaps earlier, the manufacture of the Leonard reel was transferred to the shop of Julius Vom Hofe in New York City. Vom Hofe continued to build the Leonard reel until the Second World War. A modified version of the Leonard reel is still produced and sold by Volstro Manufacturing Company of Trevoise, Pennsylvania.

The Leonard raised-pillar reel has long been a favorite with anglers. Its sound construction and classy good looks, along with the magic of the Leonard name, have also made it highly prized by collectors. As the reel's raised-pillar design is its most obvious feature, many anglers and collectors naturally assumed that this was the "improvement" of the 1877 patent. Although Philbrook does refer to the reel's "annular frame with offsets" (i.e. raised pillars), the two chief claims of the patent involve a re-

cessed side plate to contain the click mechanism and a click mechanism in which the pawl and spring are screwed to metal blocks so they can be removed for repairs. The patent also describes a frame with a formed rim "within which the handle travels, thus preventing the entanglement of the line."<sup>22</sup> One of the earliest references to protective rims on a fly reel. It is a design advance that has been so widely copied over the years that it is now nearly taken for granted on any crank-handle-style reel.

The 1880s brought a proliferation of new designs for American fly reels. By my count, nearly seventy new patents for fishing reels were granted during this ten-year span. Some of the more innovative fly-reel patents centered on efforts to design a practical multiplying fly reel, these included: James B. D'A Boulton's planetary gear fly reel (1882), Frederick Malleeson's multiplying fly reel (1883), and Abraham Coates's variable-use fly reel, which could be used as either a single-action or multiplying reel (1888). But perhaps one of the most lasting developments of this time was the automatic fly reel.

#### AUTOMATIC FLY REELS

The automatic fly reel is certainly one of the most maligned reels ever invented. It has often been criticized for its excessive weight, overcomplexity, and tendency to break down. The early automatics were mostly horizontally mounted reels, which was another strike against them in many anglers' eyes. But after more than a hundred years of being scorned and ridiculed, the automatic reel is still being manufactured and sold, and it shows no sign of becoming obsolete. Many anglers today, particularly those who frequently fish lakes and ponds, find that the one-handed ease of operation afforded by the automatic is a great convenience that enables them to manage an outboard motor, retrieve line quickly and efficiently, and keep excess line from tangling on objects on the floor of a boat—not a small order when you think about it.

The first commercially successful automatic fly reel was patented by Francis A. Loomis on December 7, 1880 (no. 235,157). Loomis lived in Onondaga, a small town on the southern outskirts of Syracuse, New York. In the following year, this patent was amended slightly in the reissue patent of July 5, 1881 (reissue no. 9,785); half the rights of this second patent were assigned to James S. Plumb of Syracuse. The firm of Loomis, Plumb, and Company, of Syracuse, New York, was formed at about this time. Then for a brief few years, they manufactured and sold, both direct and

through the trade, the Loomis and Plumb automatic reel.

Loomis justified his new design in the 1880 patent as follows:

*Heretofore fishermen's reels have been so constructed as to require a crank for winding up or retrieving the line—a process so slow, even with the most elaborate "multipliers," as to be especially vexatious and wearisome to the fisherman . . . the crank-reel is also objectionable because the strain on reeling in the fish is uneven and irregular, thus endangering its loss by the tearing out of the hook or by the breaking of the line. It is objectionable because of its slowness, enabling the fish to gain slack line and thus escape.*<sup>23</sup>

Others found the new design equally attractive. Reuben Wood (1822 to 1884), the famous tournament caster and originator of the Reub Wood Fly, submitted a testimonial to Loomis, Plumb, and Company, which was reprinted in one of their circulars. It read in part: "I have used your automatic reel this season seven weeks in the Adirondacks, and pronounce it the best reel in the world." Of course, one has to wonder a little bit about this praise, as Wood operated a sporting goods store in Syracuse with his sons. He goes on to write, "I have sold four dozen of them. . . ."<sup>24</sup>

The Loomis and Plumb automatic was made in three sizes: thirty yards, fifty yards, and a hundred yards. It was also offered in a variety of materials and finishes, including lacquered brass, nickel-plated brass, gray bronze, dark bronze, and solid-gold bronze. It would appear that the revolutionary design of Loomis and Plumb's reel created a sudden market for the automatic, for within the year a rival company introduced its own automatic reel. This was the firm of Barnum and Morehouse, also of Syracuse, formed by the partnership of Willis Scott Barnum and Fred A. Morehouse. Their reel was based on the patents received by Franklin R. Smith on July 26, 1881 (no. 244,828), and June 20, 1882 (no. 259,935), which featured an interchangeable spool and also may have provided optional use of either crank-handle or spring-lever line retrieve.<sup>25</sup>

Sometime during the mid-1880s Loomis, Plumb and Company was sold and relocated to Rochester, New York. The new owners, Phillip H. Yawman and Paul Erbe, formed a manufacturing company that began to make and sell automatic reels based on the Loomis patents. The first reels by Yawman and Erbe were identical to their predecessors' product and were even stamped with the same patent dates, though now marked with the Yawman and Erbe name. Perhaps in response to criticism about the excessive weight of automatics, a new, lighter model made of hard rubber was soon introduced, followed by

a similar lightweight pattern in aluminum. In 1888 Phillip Yawman improved the gearing of the automatic reel, making it more effective and durable. Yawman continued to develop the original Loomis design, with patents received on June 16, 1891 (no. 454,319), for a reinforced brake lever, and August 1, 1899 (no. 629,842), for the now-famous key wind.

Yawman and Erbe was eventually absorbed by Horrocks-Ibbotsson Company of Utica, New York, shortly before 1915. The Yawman and Erbe reel continued to be produced by Horrocks-Ibbotsson for a time but eventually fell victim to very strong competition by the Martin Automatic Fishing Reel Company of Mohawk, New York. In fact, the Martin Reel Company, as it is now known, continues to be one of the largest manufacturers of automatic reels and is one America's oldest surviving reel companies. It is believed to have been established about the time of Herman Martin's first automatic-fishing-reel patent of July 26, 1892.

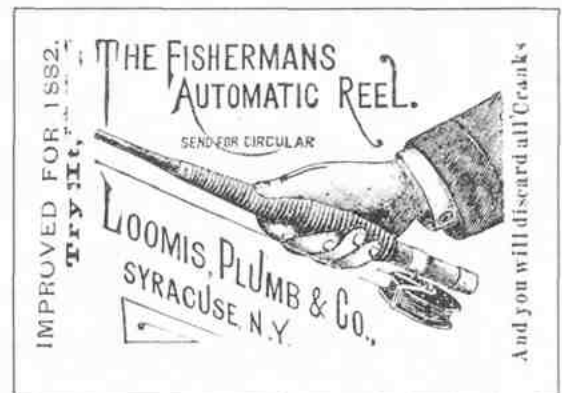
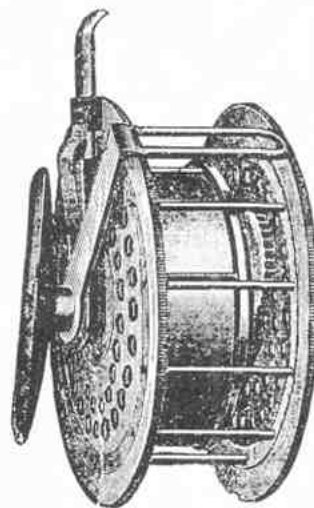
THE EARLY MASS  
PRODUCERS: HENDRYX,  
MEISSELBACH, CHUBB,  
AND PFLUEGER

In addition to introducing automatics, the 1880s brought other important changes to the fishing-tackle industry, not the least of which was a vigorous mass-production/mass-marketing approach to reelmaking. The twin principles of mass production (the division and specialization of labor and the use of machines to make standard inter-

changeable parts) were both established well before the 1880s, of course. Eli Whitney (1765 to 1825) is frequently credited for his mass production of firearms with interchangeable parts as early as 1801. This technology was certainly applied in varying degrees to the fishing-tackle industry at an early date, but it blossomed as a production strategy in the 1880s. Firms such as Thomas Chubb of Post Mills, Vermont; Enterprise Manufacturing Company (i.e., Pflueger) of Akron, Ohio; Andrew B. Hendryx Company of New Haven, Connecticut; Julius Vom Hofe of Brooklyn, New York; and A.F. Meisselbach and Brother of Newark, New Jersey, seem to have burst upon the scene all at once with large factories that churned out thousands upon thousands of inexpensive-to-medium-priced reels for an ever-widening market.

These large manufacturers prospered on the volume, variety, and low cost of their products. For example, the Andrew B. Hendryx Company advertised at one point that it made "175 sizes and styles of fishing reels, in sizes from 25 to 400 yards capacity, at prices from 25 cents to \$25.00 per reel."<sup>26</sup> This amazing range of goods included "Boys Reels," so-called because they were simple, inexpensive riveted patterns mostly suited to inexperienced anglers, as well as really clever and well-executed designs such as the Hendryx aluminum or nickel-silver raised-pillar fly reel that incorporated many of the improvements outlined in the numerous Hendryx patents.

Nearly all the major mass producers of tackle issued substantial and well-illustrated catalogs of their products. Tacklemakers have always advertised their goods in one way or another. Shop signs, trade cards, broadsheets, business



Left: Francis Loomis patented the first automatic reel on December 7, 1880. A detail from the original patent. (United States Patent Office, Letters Patent, No. 235,157.) Right: A period Loomis, Plumb & Co. advertisement which appeared in *The American Angler*, April 29, 1882.

directory listings, and advertisements appended to the prefatory matter of angling books were all commonly used methods of advertising during early times, and most continue to be used today. With the introduction of magazines for sportsmen that began in the early nineteenth century, a vast amount of tackle advertising was done by both manufacturers and retailers in this source as well. Some of the earlier and more important American periodicals of this type were the *American Turf Register and Sporting Magazine* (1829 to 1844), *Spirit of the Times* (1831 to 1861), *Forest & Stream* (1873 to 1930), and the *American Angler* (1881 to 1900).<sup>27</sup> While not downplaying the significance of such early magazine advertising, it does seem that mass marketing of tackle really hit its stride with the manufacturer-specific catalogs of the 1880s. The wholesale and retail catalogs of Thomas Chubb, for instance, were often as thick as a telephone book for a small city and literally crammed with illustrations and descriptions of new tackle.<sup>28</sup>

### THE VOM HOFE REEL-MAKING FAMILY

The tradition of handcrafted reels continued to flourish despite the rise and expansion of the large reel factories. In fact, perhaps the best-known reelmaker of the era was Edward Vom Hofe. In 1880, Vom Hofe ran a small New York City shop that employed three men working year-round, and with the aid of a single horsepower engine (steam pow-

ered), the Vom Hofe shop turned out a limited number of very high-quality reels.<sup>29</sup> The thoughtful design and sheer beauty of these reels quickly helped to establish Vom Hofe's reputation—so much so that many collectors today believe that Edward Vom Hofe's reels are to America what Hardy reels are to Britain—the undisputed classics of their age.

Unlike Hardy, which has been extensively studied, so little has been written about Vom Hofe that some background seems in order. The patriarch of the Vom Hofe reel-making family was Frederick Vom Hofe (1806 to 1885). He was born in Altena, a province of Westphalia, Germany, and was educated for a military career but decided to become a brass founder. According to one account, Vom Hofe may have descended from nobility and lived in the castle of the Counts von der Mark (now known as Altena Castle).<sup>30</sup> He married Wilhelmina Lubling of Altena and had five children, the most noteworthy for present purposes being Julius (1837 to 1907) and Edward (1846 to 1920) who both eventually entered the fishing-tackle trade. Due in part to the growing political unrest in Europe at the time, Frederick made plans to emigrate to America, which he did at some time during 1847 or 1848. He sent for his family shortly afterward, and they arrived in New York City in the fall of 1849 after a voyage of twenty-three days from Antwerp.<sup>31</sup>

In 1857, Frederick Vom Hofe began a business manufacturing fishing reels. He was living at 545 Pearl Street and did not have a separate business address. Two years later he was doing business at 66 Fulton Street. Both locations are in

the southern part of Manhattan, a few blocks from the East River and a short distance from where the Hudson River and East River join to form Upper Bay. The Vom Hofe reels of this period are large brass multipliers, typical New York ball-handle reels, intended for saltwater use.

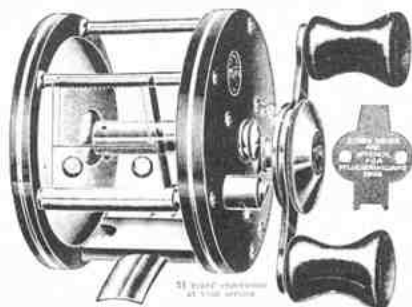
By 1860 Frederick was officially joined in business by his second son, Julius (his first son, Frederick Jr., and third son, William, both became glass engravers), and reels at this time were marked with the now famous stamp "F. Vom Hofe & Son, maker." These reels were still primarily in the New York ball-handle style, although there was now a larger range of sizes, including some beautifully diminutive freshwater models that featured decorative scribing and fluting, removable bearing caps, and chamfered head-cap edges.

1867 was a big year for Vom Hofe: the family moved from Manhattan to 230 Graham Avenue in Brooklyn; Julius received the first of many reel patents on November 26; and Edward, the youngest Vom Hofe son, started his own fishing-tackle business. Business was apparently good in the years immediately following the Civil War, for the Vom Hofes prospered.

F. Vom Hofe and Son was now located in a factory on South Fifth, corner of Tenth, in Brooklyn, and began manufacturing on a large scale. They made different grades and styles of reels for the trade (such as Bradford and Anthony of Boston) as well as under their own mark. It seems clear that even prior to Frederick's retirement in 1882, Julius had built his father's small reelmaking operation into a sizable business that employed a dozen workers and had unabashedly entered the age of mass production.<sup>32</sup>

Edward Vom Hofe lived in Brooklyn but worked in Manhattan. He established a fishing-tackle shop near the family's old stand on Fulton Street and maintained this business at various locations along Fulton Street for more than fifty years. It is unclear if Edward was initially selling goods other than those of his own make, but in time he was operating a fully equipped retail store and large mail-order business that represented an extensive line of products by various manufacturers, including his own reels and those of his older brother, Julius.

Edward Vom Hofe was primarily a maker of saltwater reels. His catalogs listed more saltwater models than freshwater models, and judging by their availability on the antique tackle market, his saltwater reels are two or three times as common as his freshwater reels. Vom Hofe was himself a saltwater fisherman and has been described as an expert



Left: A detail from an *Enterprise Mfg. Co.* advertisement (makers of Pflueger Reels), which appeared in the July, 1916, issue of *Field & Stream*. Below: An advertisement for the *Andrew B. Hendryx Co.* which appeared in *The American Angler*, July 19, 1990.

## HENDRYX

Makes Two Hundred and Thirty-seven different styles of **FISHING REELS** in sizes from twenty five to three hundred yards.

All styles and sizes of **Flush Handle, Rubber Plate and Multipliers** are **SCREWED REELS** constructed with interchangeable parts the same as gun or sewing Machine parts. Our **REELS** are made with improved automatic machinery, operated by the best skilled labor and are **Superior in Construction and Finish**, and are indisputably the best line of **REELS** made.

Prices from 25 Cents to \$15.00. All first-class dealers sell them. Send for our Catalogue, and we will send any kind of Reel by mail on receipt of price.

**THE ANDREW B. HENDRYX CO.,**  
NEW HAVEN, - - - CONNECTICUT.

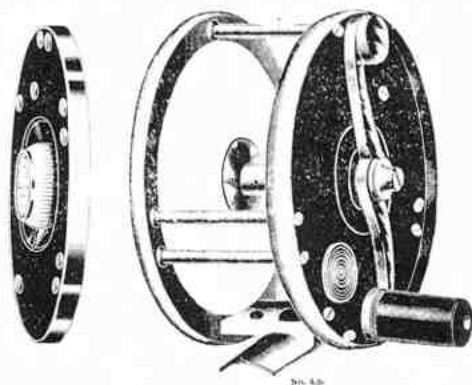
striped-bass fisherman as well as "one of the first and most successful tarpon fishermen." He's believed to have been the second angler to land a tarpon weighing more than 200 pounds on rod and reel—a 210-pound fish caught at Captiva Pass, Florida, on April 30, 1898.<sup>33</sup>

The first Edward Vom Hofe reels were solid-nickel-silver striper reels. The earliest example known is the 1867 Timothy Y. Brown presentation reel in the collection of The Angler's Club of New York. It was built during Edward Vom Hofe's first year of business when he was a young man of twenty-one. Nickel silver does not contain any silver, of course; it is a silver-colored alloy composed primarily of copper, zinc, and nickel. It is harder and stronger than brass (an alloy of copper and zinc), is resistant to corrosion, and takes a high polish. Nickel silver is also called *German silver*. This has led some writers to suggest that the Vom Hofes either introduced or pioneered the use of this metal for reelmaking.<sup>34</sup> As attractive as this explanation seems, it does not completely fit the facts. As early as 1841 William Schreiber, in his *Sporting Manual*, was writing of "German Silver" reels, and this was more than fifteen years before the Vom Hofe reelmaking operation began.<sup>35</sup>

The all-metal reels that were typical of the 1860s and of Edward Vom Hofe's early output were very heavy and began to give way to new, lighter weight models built with nickel-silver frames and black hard-rubber sideplates. Hard rubber, also known as Ebonite, came into general use following Charles Goodyear's invention of vulcanization in 1839, but as far as I have been able to determine, it was not used by reelmakers to any extent until the 1870s.<sup>36</sup> In 1872, Dr. Alonzo H. Fowler, a dentist from Ithaca, New York, designed a reel made completely of hard rubber, which was known as Fowler's Gem. It was extremely fragile and was marketed for only a short time. Two years later, Charles F. Orvis mentioned the optional use of hard rubber for sideplates in his patent reel, but such a reel was apparently never manufactured. Edward Vom Hofe introduced black hard-rubber sideplates on his reels at about this time.

Edward Vom Hofe's offering of fly reels eventually grew to seven basic models: the Peerless (no. 355), a click reel for trout and bass; the Perfection (no. 360), an adjustable drag reel for trout and bass; the Cascapedia (no. 413), a click reel for salmon; the Restigouche (no. 423), an adjustable drag reel for salmon; the Tobique (no. 504), a multiplying and adjustable drag reel for salmon in which the handle revolved on a center shaft; the Colonel Thompson (no. 484), a multiplying and adjustable

Right: Edward Vom Hofe's "Tobique" multiplying salmon and grilse fly reel. This illustration originally appeared in the "Edward Vom Hofe & Co. Fine Fishing Tackle Catalog of 1928." Below: An Edward Vom Hofe advertisement from *The American Angler* of July 5, 1890.



Edward Vom Hofe,  
95 and 97 Fulton Street, New York.  
MANUFACTURER OF  
**FISHING TACKLE.**

Manufacturer of the celebrated VOM HOFE REEL.

Established 1867.

Enclose 25 cents in stamps for the most complete illustrated 128 page catalogue published. This amount may be deducted from the first purchase of one dollar and over.

drag reel with offset handle for salmon; and the Griswold (no. 496), a multiplying and adjustable drag reel with offset handle for salmon and tarpon.

Edward Vom Hofe was the complete reelmaker, interested in all aspects of his craft and constantly striving to improve his product. His patents of 1879, 1883, 1896, and 1902 are indicative of a lifelong commitment to the science and technology of reel design. A close look at any of his reels discloses a painstaking attention to detail in handcut, countersunk screws, shouldered pillars, unique sliding oil caps, and the use of Tobin bronze for bearings. But in the end, it is Vom Hofe's artistry that sets him apart. His reels are dazzlingly elegant; the black hard-rubber sideplates and richly contrasting nickel-silver frames and S-shaped handle are the essence of a style that has had a far-reaching impact of American reel design. Its influence can be traced in the work of reelmakers such as Otto Zwarg (1899 to 1958), Arthur Walker (1897 to 1976), and Stanley Bogdan (current).

Vom Hofe reels were made up to the time of the Second World War. Julius Vom Hofe was succeeded in business by his oldest son, Julius Jr. (1871 to 1939), and Edward Vom Hofe was also succeeded by his oldest son, Edwin (1878 to ?). In the late fall of 1940, the Edward Vom Hofe Company was sold and moved to Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, where it was established as a reel-making division of the Ocean City Manufacturing Company. It was dissolved within a few years because of wartime shortages of materials. □

#### END NOTES

<sup>1</sup> Jerome V. C. Smith, *Natural History of the Fishes of Massachusetts, Embracing a Practical Essay on Angling*, reprint of the 1833 ed. (New York: Freshet Press, 1970), pp. 331, 348.

"Notwithstanding the fact that the artificial fly has seldom been used by the frequenters of this lake [Sebago Lake], it does not follow that the practice of fly-fishing would not be attended with the same success, which attends the act as practiced without exception upon the various waters in England and Scotland."

Elsewhere, Smith speaks of fishing for Atlantic salmon on the Dennys River in Maine and notes that to take the salmon on a fly is "... an achievement which had been rarely attempted and probably never accomplished, unless by foreigners, except in the single instance of one of our party, who on a previous visit to this wild river, in a more propitious season, had the good fortune to realize that object, which is said to constitute the apex of the angler's ambition."

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 357

<sup>3</sup> *Longworth's American Almanac, New-York Register, and City Directory* (New York, 1825 to 1838).

<sup>4</sup> Smith, *op. cit.* (see note 88.), p. 337.

<sup>5</sup> Mary Kefover Kelly, "Antique Reels," *The American Sporting Collector's Handbook*, rev. ed.: ed., Allan J. Liu, (Tulsa, OK: Winchester Press, 1982), pp. 245-246. "John C. Conroy, who must be considered America's first full-time professional tackle-maker, opened his shop in New York City in 1830 and in 1838 was advertising his multiplying reels with balanced cranks in the *Spirit of the Times*. William T. Porter, editor of the *Spirit*, and a devotee of Conroy's, implied in 1843 that the idea originated with Conroy. There is no proof of this, but the Conroy ads are the first reference to balance cranks that I have seen."

<sup>6</sup> Robert Page Lincoln, "The Kentucky Reel," *Field & Stream* (March 1930), pp. 26-27, 77-78.

<sup>7</sup> James A. Henshall, "Evolution of the Kentucky Reel," *Book of the Black Bass* (Cincinnati: Robert Clarke Co., 1904), p. 191. "Mr. J. L. Sage, of Lexington, Ky. a veteran angler, who is still making 'Kentucky Reels,' presented me with a click reel, and showed me his fly-rod and flies, all made and used by him as long ago as 1848: so that fly-fishing for black bass was practiced as

early in Kentucky as in any other section of the country." For a good study of J. L. Sage, see: Frank M. Stewart, "Sage's Regal Reels: J. L. Sage, Manufacturer of Fine Kentucky Fishing Reels," *Kentucky Happy Hunting Ground*, vol. 40, no. 5 (September-October 1984), pp. 12-14.

J. L. Sage excepted, available evidence suggests that those few Kentucky reelsmiths that did make single-action reels did not begin doing so until around the turn of the century or shortly thereafter. B. F. Meek and Sons of Louisville, Kentucky, and George W. Gayle and Son of Frankfort, Kentucky, both manufactured high-quality single-action fly reels. Meek produced the model 44 fly reel, a delectable little gem of a reel made of solid nickel silver, and Gayle, more mindful of the weight of his reels, produced a simply elegant handmade nickel-silver and hard-rubber fly reel, later reducing weight even further with a handmade model made almost entirely of aluminum. All of these single-action Kentucky fly reels were traditional in appearance, well crafted, and, as one might expect, extremely smooth running.

<sup>8</sup> James A. Henshall, "Evolution of the Kentucky Reel," *Outing*, vol. 37, no. 3 (December 1900), pp. 288-293.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 288. "The multiplying fishing reel originated in Kentucky about the beginning of the nineteenth century. It has been asserted that it was made in England, but I have been unable to find any reference to it, even in the oldest British works on angling. . . . about 1810, there existed the Bourbon County Angling Club, of which George Synder, of Paris, Ky, was the president; and he it was who made the first 'Kentucky Reel,' which has since become so famous, and in my opinion the first multiplying reel in the world."

But in *Book of the Black Bass* (Cincinnati: Stewart Kidd, 1923), pp. 217-218, Henshall makes the following remarks about the origin of the multiplying reel:

"In the last decade of the eighteenth century, and the first decade of the nineteenth, there is mention of a brass multiplying reel or winch, which, so far as I can learn, occurs only in the following books: *The art of Angling*, by Best, 1787; *Rural Sports*, by Daniel, 1807; *The Complete Angler's Vade-Mecum*, by Williamson, 1808. With these exceptions, so far as I am aware, there is no mention of the multiplying reel in the numerous books on angling published in England during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Those just alluded to were probably crude affairs, in as much as they did not come into general use. . . . The originator and inventor, de facto, of the multiplying reel as it exists to-day, was George Snyder, a watchmaker and silversmith, of Paris, Kentucky. He began making them for himself and angling friends in 1805."

<sup>10</sup> Walton, op. cit. (see note 27.), pt. 1, pp. 116-117.

<sup>11</sup> James A. Henshall, *Book of the Black Bass*, 1904 ed., p. 178.

<sup>12</sup> John J. Brown, *The American Angler's Guide; or Complete Fisher's Manual, for the United States . . .*, 3rd ed. (New York: H. Long and Bro., 1849), p. 24.

<sup>13</sup> John Warrin was the predecessor of Andrew Clerk and Co., which in turn became Abbey and Imbrie in 1875.

<sup>14</sup> United States letters patent to William Billinghurst of Rochester, NY, for "new and useful improvements in fishing-reels." August 9, 1859 (no. 24,087), pp. 1-2.

<sup>15</sup> For a more detailed study of side-mount fly reels, see Jim Brown, "Side-Mount Fly Reels: American Classics." *The American Fly Fisher*, vol. 12, no. 1 (winter 1985), pp. 14-17.

The "One Man, One Rod . . . Exhibition," op. cit. (see note 47.), p. 14, lists one British side-mount reel: catalog entry no. 182. This is Frederick Skinner's Archimedian reel, which received British registered design no. 1426 on April 25, 1848. The description and accompanying illustration show a side-mount reel with perforated side-plates. I have been informed that the original

design specifications and drawing for the Skinner reel describe and show it with spike-mount fitting, and lacking perforations, so it remains an open question whether the reel as catalogued and exhibited is completely original.

<sup>16</sup> Vernon, op. cit. (see note 3.), p. 80.

<sup>17</sup> For a discussion of the evolution of the Orvis reel, see Jim Brown, "Variations in the Orvis 1874 Trout Reel," *Antique Fishing Collectibles Newsletter*, vol. 1, no. 4 (May-June 1986), pp. 14-15.

<sup>18</sup> *Waterbury Directory, 1872*, (Waterbury, CT: S.N.: 1872) p. 110. "The Terry Clock Co., Waterbury, Conn., manufacturers of plain and ornamental clocks. Terry's patent clocks made exclusively by this company. Also manufacturers of fish reels, plain, multiplying, click, drag and combination multiplying reels, can be used with click, or drag, or without, at option."

<sup>19</sup> For a complete account, see Jim Brown, "James J. Ross's 1869 Patent Fly Reel," *The American Fly Fisher*, vol. 11, no. 2 (Spring 1984), pp. 14-17.

<sup>20</sup> While the raised-pillar pattern of fly reel is customarily thought of as distinctly American in style, it is entirely possible that it originated in Britain. The "One Man, One Rod . . . Exhibition," op. cit. (see note 47.), p. 13, describes and illustrates a small brass Birmingham reel with raised pillars, marked "Little patent" (catalog entry no. 175), believed to have been made in 1851. If this dating is correct, this would be significantly earlier than Ross's patent. In general, though, the raised-pillar reel was never as popular in Britain as it was in the United States.

<sup>21</sup> For an outstanding account of Hiram Leonard and Leonard rods, see Martin J. Keane, *Classic Rods and Rodmakers* (New York: Winchester Press, 1976), pp. 29-49.

Another fine study that includes a thoughtful treatment of the Leonard reel is Mary Keffer Kelly, "Early Leonard," *The American Fly Fisher*, vol. 6, no. 1 (Spring 1979), pp. 12-14, 24-28.

<sup>22</sup> United States letters patent to Francis J. Philbrook, of Bangor, ME, assigned to Hiram L. Leonard, of same place, for an "Improvement in reels for fishing-lines," June 12, 1877 (no. 191,813), p. 1.

<sup>23</sup> United States letters patent to Francis A. Loomis, of Onondaga, NY, for an "Improvement in fishermen's reels." December 7, 1880 (no. 235,257), lines 7-22.

<sup>24</sup> Price list and recommendation circular of the Fisherman's Automatic Reel, circular no. 3., Loomis, Plumb, and Co., patentees and manufacturers, Syracuse, NY, 1882, p. 8.

<sup>25</sup> Netherton, op. cit. (see note 86.), p. 347. In a brief biographical sketch of Willis Scott Barnum (1835 to 1912), Netherton writes: "Willis Barnum was a remarkable sportsman with many interests and many talents. He was the proprietor of the Maple Bay Resort near Syracuse. At one time he was in the sporting goods business with Fred A. Morehouse (Barnum and Morehouse). The city directory listed Barnum & Morehouse Sporting Goods, 18 East Genesee Street, Syracuse, New York. *The Syracuse Journal*, April 2, 1881 printed an article, 'A New Reel, the Invention of a Sportsman.' The article stated that W.S. Barnum had on display a model of an automatic reel that operated with a spring and simple wheels. *It could be operated by a crank or with the spring.*" [emphasis added]

Concerning the suddenly favorable market for automatic reels in the 1880s, it should probably be noted that this was almost exclusively an American phenomenon. While some American automatics were carried in British tackle catalogs, the British never much favored this style of reel. Interestingly, Beazley, loc. cit. (see note 67.), points out that the first automatic reel was most likely a British invention: "Ronalds [The Flyfishers Entomology, 1836, p. 24] mentioned a reel with a spiral spring which acts . . . upon the axis to wind up the line; and this is presumably the Chesterman self-winding reel that Shipley refers to in his *A True Treatise on the Art of Fly-Fishing*, 1838 [p. 68]." The Chesterman reel was probably not a commer-

cial success since no example has survived for study. Lacking a firm idea of the reel's design, we are unable to say whether it may have served as a prototype for the 1880 Loomis patent.

<sup>26</sup> Dana Collection at the New Haven Colony Historical Society, *New Haven Old and New*, vol. 123, p. 87.

<sup>27</sup> Austin S. Hogan, *American Sporting Periodicals of Angling Interest: a selected check list and guide* (Manchester, VT: The Museum of American Fly Fishing, 1973).

<sup>28</sup> As an example of the point I'm trying to make regarding manufacturers' catalogs of the 1880s, my personal collection of fishing-tackle catalogs (held mostly in photocopy) contains more than 500 items, but only five, or less than one percent, can be positively dated as pre-1880, while nearly ten percent are from the 1880s alone. The earliest catalog in the collection is by John Cheek, the proprietor of the Golden Perch tackle shop of London, dated 1841. (I have seen references to Cheek catalogs from the 1830s.) The earliest American catalog in the collection is by Thomas H. Bate and Co. of New York City and is dated 1867.

<sup>29</sup> The 1880 Census of the United States, Schedule 3, Manufacturers "Edward Vom Hofe, Manhattan."

<sup>30</sup> Carl Wilhelm Schlegel, *Schlegel's German-American Families in the United States* (New York: The American Historical Society, 1917), vol. 2, "Vom Hofe," pp. 369-380.

<sup>31</sup> *U.S. Passenger List No. 1330*. Arriving at New York on the American Bark *Kirkwood*, Sept. 26, 1849; ". . . Mina Vom Hofe, Frederick [jr.], Julius, Wilhelm, Minna, Edward. . . ."

*New York Herald*, Sept. 26, 1849; arrived "Bark Kirkwood, Martin, Antwerp, 23 days, in ballast to Mason & Thompson and 110 steerage passengers, to W. Welser. . . ."

<sup>32</sup> The 1880 Census of the United States, Schedule 3, Manufacturers "Julius Vom Hofe, Brooklyn."

<sup>33</sup> F. Gray Griswold, *The Tarpon* (New York: printed for the author, 1922), pp. 19, 33.

<sup>34</sup> A. J. Campbell, "The New York Reel," *Salt Water Sportsman* (November 1982), p. 43.

"The improved New York reel, built from a better material and with the flair of old-world craftsmanship, was a reality by 1856-57. In that period, Frederick 'Fritz' Vonhof had established a storefront at 545 Pearl Street (on the waterfront near Fulton). The neighboring shop was owned by Louis Vonhof, a 'smith,' and probably a brother. Frederick was listed in the 'New York Directory' as a 'reelmaker,' and the new material that he and Louis were working with became known as 'German silver.'"

Louis Vom Hofe (1808 to 1880) was indeed the younger brother of Frederick, but his participation in the fishing-tackle trade is far from established. Directories list his trade variously as smith, stitcher, capmaker, and jeweler, but never as a maker of fishing tackle or reels. It is clear from the Schreiner quotation, which follows in note 122., that nickel silver was known as German silver prior to the 1850s and, in fact, was not a new material at the time. The Chinese were making the alloy known as *pai-tung* as early as B.C. 200, and the composition of the nickel-silver alloy was established in the West by 1776. It was being produced on a major commercial scale during the 1840s, when it was discovered that it formed a desirable base for the new process of silver electroplating.

<sup>35</sup> William H. Schreiner, *Schreiner's Sporting Manual* (Philadelphia: S. Douglas Wyeth, 1841), p. 28. "The reel or winch is indispensable when playing a heavy fish with delicate tackle, they are made of brass or German silver, and vary in size, to hold from twenty to a hundred yards of line."

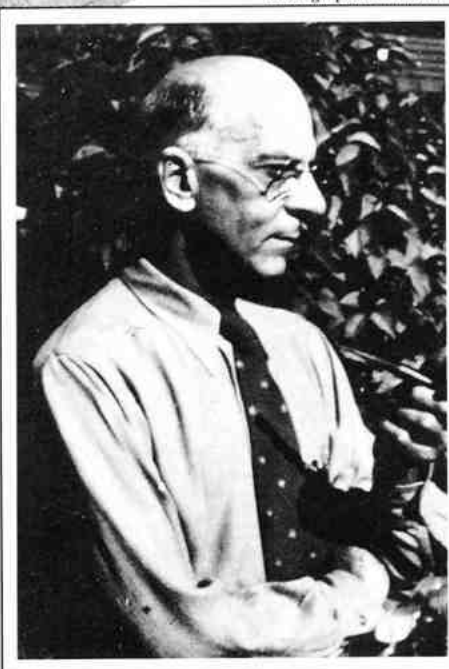
<sup>36</sup> The only pre-1870 use of hard rubber that I've seen on a fishing reel is the grasp on the 1867 Timothy Y. Brown Presentation reel. This tends to confirm a belief that Edward Vom Hofe was one of the earliest reelmakers to experiment with hard rubber.

PART I

# Lyle L. Dickerson and the Rodmaker's Rod

by Gerald S. Stein, M.D. with James W. Schaaf

Photographer unknown



No biographical or technical work—to which a host of cooperative authorities and collectors contribute their wealth of expertise and individual observation—is ever completed. There is always that elusive missing fragment of information or unreliable data. In time, we hope others will add additional pieces to the body of knowledge on Lyle Dickerson, his rods, rod-making procedures, and equipment.

In this, the first of two installments, we have tried to give the reader insight into the technology, jargon, nomenclature, and terminology used by the rodmaker who must be a woodworker, machinist, metalworker, and seamstress in his pursuit of the art and science of "making rods." Any assistance, comments, critique, or information about Lyle Dickerson, his rodmaking, and those of his rods which still exist will be appreciated.

G.S.S., M.D. & J.W.S.

When my father completed his wood lathe, we could build rods every day but Monday. On Monday my mother did the wash, and the lathe motor had to go back on the washing machine where it came from.

GLENN DICKERSON  
(SON)

Lyle was in the business of making a better rod—completely hand done—by himself. Anything else would have put him into another business. He admired the work of Payne and Leonard and appreciated Paul Young. He told Bob Summers (an outstanding rodmaker who worked with Paul Young and knew Dickerson and his work well) that he wanted none of the "spotted zebra" effect of the Young rods. He wanted his rods plain, clear, and light in color.

He was considered a "loner," reflective, with intense concentration. He was often completely preoccupied with a task. . . . He worked long hours alone. With a green eye shade covering his eyes, he ended the day winding the rods under the bright lamp late at night.

JANE DICKERSON RUDOLPH  
(DAUGHTER)

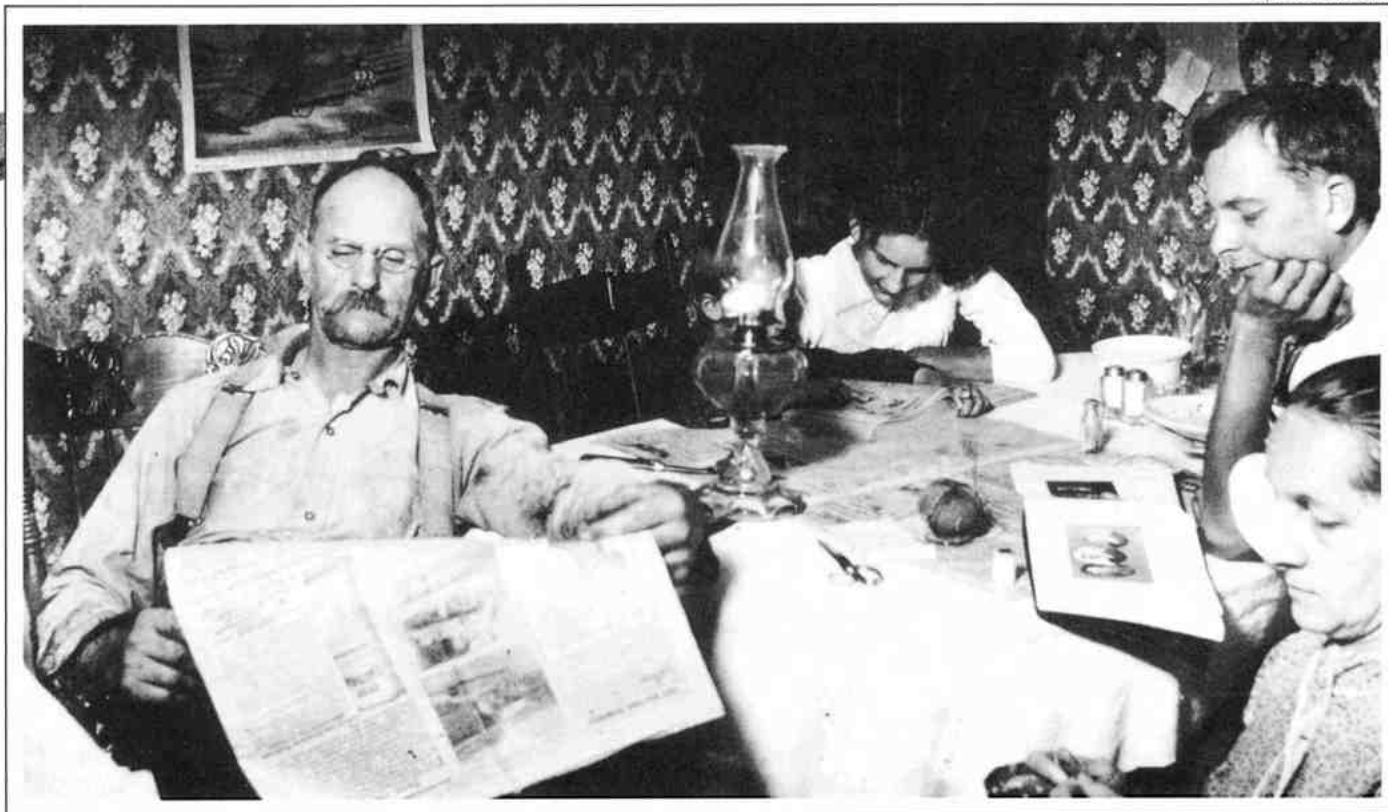
Pop was every inch the craftsman. He was an artist in his determination to do the best of which he was capable . . . in the resolute performance of never taking a short cut, never being stingy with materials nor the number of hours necessary to create the perfect rod. He was proud of his work. He understood that he was in the act of making a unique and personal item. His rods stood for him. The better his rods, the better was his mastery.

CHARLOTTE GOLCZYNSKI DICKERSON  
(DAUGHTER-IN-LAW)

LYLE LINDEN DICKERSON, a decathlon gold-medal winner in school, attended college on a scholarship and became a teacher. Later he tried selling trucks, stocks and bonds, and, finally, real estate before losing his job when the Depression hit. "If the Depression hadn't come along, I would never have gone into rod-making," he noted.

He returned to his mother's home in Syracuse, New York, where, according to his daughter, "He saw his grandfather's workshop and immediately recognized his calling as a craftsman. . . . He had a deep sense that his own future lay in following his own ideas and working with his hands."

He built fly rods and tied his own flies as a boy growing up in the child's paradise of Bellaire, Michigan, in the north-



Opposite: Lyle L. Dickerson as photographed during the 1930s. Above: A Dickerson family portrait, probably taken circa 1910. Lyle and his mother are seated on right. Photos courtesy of the Dickerson family.

west Lower Peninsula where he was born in 1891. Later Lyle would return to "retire" there in 1956, only to build fly rods for many years prior to his death in Bellaire in 1981.

He had been making rods for friends and his brother, Fred, perhaps as early as 1928, when he was thirty-seven years old. His good friend, Charlie Hall, reported, "Lyle couldn't find a rod anywhere that suited him. That's what got him into making rods in the first place. He told me that of all the rods he looked at, he preferred what Payne [E. F. Payne Rod Company] was doing. He felt they had done the best job of them all."

Dickerson's formal ledger records his first rod sale in January 1931. His ninth fully finished trout rod sold in April 1931. His daughter observes, "When he started out, he didn't have a goal in mind. He didn't start out to be an established rod maker."

Dickerson's rods evolved through the early 1930s, into what became known as "The Dickerson Rod, a Rodmaker's Rod." The 1931 rod, a "Model 8½' Dry Fly Special," used black silk wrappings with maroon wraps on either side as both a signature wrap and, at least on this "Special" rod, as intermediate wraps between each guide. This style developed with modifications into the best-

known Dickerson design of brown wraps tipped in black—without intermediate wraps. Lovely yellow-gold wraps tipped in black were used occasionally, such as on a wife's rod when Dickerson made a matched pair of rods for a couple, or for "Special" rods. A rare rod such as the "Model 861611 Special," combined such wraps with single, yellow-gold intermediate windings, a subtle reminder of Dickerson's earliest rods.

Despite the capacity he demonstrated for such design, Dickerson seemed personally drawn to function over form. Within a few years he had substituted shorter, plain ferrules for the originals, which had two decorative rings, apparently because the rings contributed nothing structurally.

Yet the same Depression which launched Dickerson's career made it difficult to sell rods. And even beyond the hard times, Dickerson was still no salesman. As George Griffiths, the founder of Trout Unlimited, declared about his old friend, "He was too honest a man to be in the rod business."

Describing several of the Dickerson rods he has owned, Griffiths showed no such reticence in appraising Dickerson's work, "The Dickerson rods were the top rods in the country. It is like pointing your finger to cast with them."

L. L. Dickerson had indeed found his calling in rodmaking. Even an early rod, such as his 1933 "Model 86E," feels and casts right. Nevertheless, Dickerson could hardly have supported his family of three sons and a daughter when he sold only thirty-five finished rods—at \$38 apiece—in the four years from 1931 until 1935 when the late Ray Bergman began distributing Dickerson rods and business really picked up. With the assistance of other distributors like Earl Leitz and the late Art Flick, sales began to match the quality of the rods. The ledger shows an impressive high of over 100 hand-made rods in 1946, with Dickerson's son Glenn and brother Fred helping out part time in what was otherwise an unusual one-man shop. Rods sold well until the mid-1950s.

We do not know all the ways other people may have contributed to Dickerson's operation. At the same time that Bergman's first order appeared in the ledger in 1935, Dickerson's numbering system designating his rod models changed. His first few rods had been numbered consecutively for each rod length, such as "Model 801" to designate his first eight-foot rod. Soon his rods were marked simply with their length and weight, such as "8½ ft. 4½ oz." By 1933 some of the rods had markings like

"86E" indicating the 8'6" length and the HEH silk line size.

Whether originated by Dickerson or Bergman—or growing out of their collaboration—the new and final system was a stroke of engineering precision, using length of rod and size of ferrule(s). For example, 761510 designated a 7'6" rod with a 15/16" butt-section ferrule and a 10/64" mid-section ferrule. Since the rod used two ferrules, it had three sections. Dickerson never again changed this numbering system through the last rod he is known to have started, an unfinished 1975 "Model 8014," an 8'0" rod using a single 14/64" butt-section ferrule, thus a two-piece rod.

The original Dickerson catalog was printed circa 1938, instead of indicating that Dickerson rods were sturdy enough to stand up "under severe use," a typesetting error substituted "under severe abuse," so Dickerson did not circulate it.

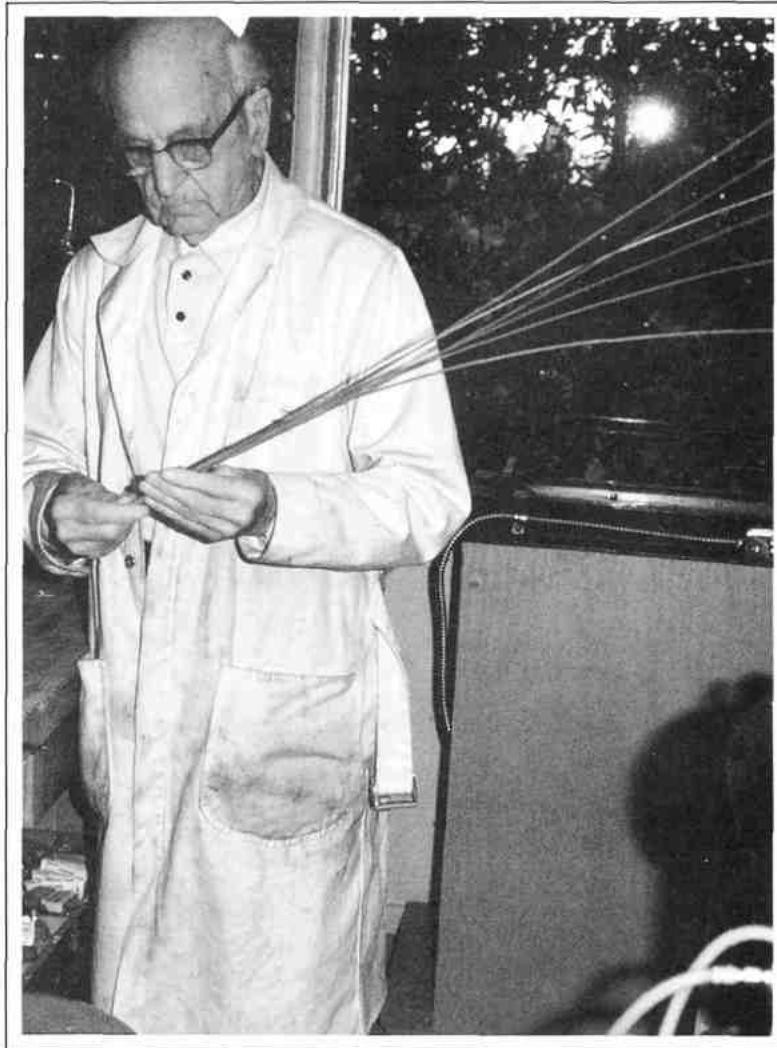
His one catalog was issued in about 1946, listing and describing eleven rod models. Five of these used a heavier line than had been indicated for these models in the original catalog. It is not clear whether this was due to changed line standards or to the evolution of these rod tapers.

The first collector of Dickerson rods was a prominent Detroit businessman, John Sweeney, Jr. He was a friend and a very good customer of Dickerson's as were Bill Rennie, Don Valley, the Pixley family, and others, though Sweeney may have been a critically important patron as well. Sweeney owned numerous Dickerson rods and gave them as gifts; he had one painted white to diminish the risk of breaking it while night fishing at the Castalia Club in Ohio, and possessed a three-foot miniature rod complete with a Dickerson-made reel, a gift from Lyle. Dick Loebel, a friend and fishing partner, who tied an authentic size 20 Jock Scott salmon fly for the miniature set, describes attending a Sweeney dinner party with Dickerson and receiving a "Dickerson handmade" net, "One of a stack of nets for guests." They were probably built by brother Fred, but were likely designed in several styles by Lyle.

After Sweeney's death, his rods were given freely to family and friends; twenty which still remained were offered for sale for a total of \$870 in 1972. So many rods for so little money seems remarkable, as the occasional Dickersons which become available now command prices equalled only by such long-established collectables as Gillum and Garrison rods.

Like Gillum, Dickerson has been known as a maker of fast-action rods. Asked about this reputation, Dickerson's daughter responds, "Actually he probably didn't like fast rods as well."

The "Model 901812" rod with its



*The artist in his element: Dickerson assembling a rod tip in 1974. The Dickerson Collection of the American Museum of Fly Fishing.*

unique, burlled, pink rosewood reel-seat spacer was one of Dickerson's personal fishing rods. A medium-action rod, he traded it to Dick Loebel for an even lighter "Model 901812" to make casting easier on his shoulder. Bob Summers describes another of Dickerson's personal rods, a "Model 8013," as "not a particularly fast rod." This description fits the 1931 and 1933 rods as well.

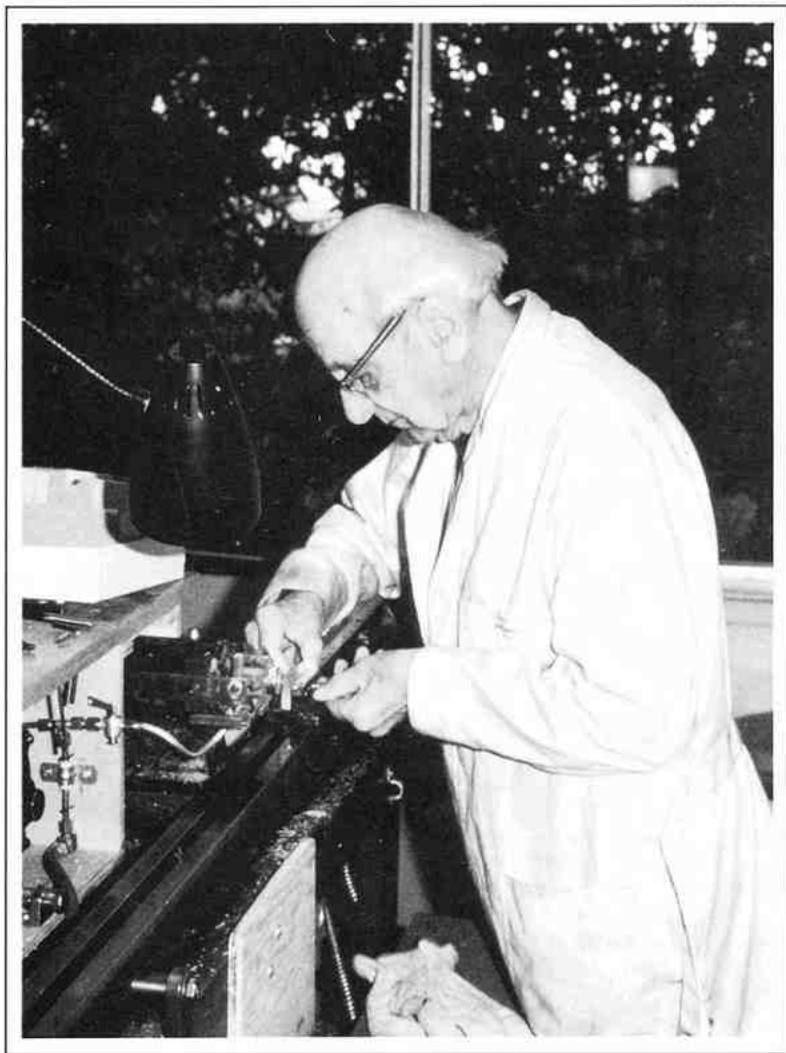
Dick Loebel explains this disparity between Dickerson's reputation and his personal preference: "I think Dickerson designed his rods according to the needs of his clients."

A number of Dickerson's friends and customers did indeed insist on fast rods. Distributor Earl Leitz says clearly, "I didn't want any rod that didn't have lots of backbone. Faster rods are especially good for distance casting." (Dickerson's captured national casting championships.)

Tim Bedford, the old friend and customer to whom Dickerson passed on his rodmaking machinery before his death, describes first being attracted to Dickerson rods when fishing with Earl Leitz because he could cast much further with them than with the rods he was using. Bedford later used the Dickerson rod-making equipment to build rods which were even stronger than the fastest Dickerson.

It appears to have been the two-piece rods made mostly after World War II on which the Dickerson reputation for fast rods is largely based. One of the most numerous of these two-piece rods is the "Model 8014," perhaps the single best-known of all the Dickerson models. Yet the "Model 8014" was built to the specific needs of a customer. Joe Webb, M.D., a Bellaire friend of Dickerson's, commented on the "Model 8014s" he has owned, "Dickerson would never have





*Dickerson at work on his milling machine, 1974. The Dickerson Collection of the American Museum of Fly Fishing.*

made the rod so heavy and so powerful."

The "Model 8014" was custom designed to meet the requirements of Jerry Weber of the Hudson Department Store family of Michigan. He fished the Au Sable River for long periods every summer with his guides and ordered three custom rods. Later, other customers requested duplicates of these special rods which were so effective on the Au Sable.

The powerful "Model 8014 Guide" and the still more powerful "Model 8015 Guide Special," were even more specialized rods built for Au Sable guides like Norval Stephan. They were designed so the guide sitting in the stern of the unique Au Sable River boat could quickly make pinpoint casts to rising trout without false casting. All the rods of this series were designed with tips that were strong enough to pull hooked fish out of the sweeper branches which line the Au Sable banks. Though these

models are often seen as prototypical Dickerson designs, they are more representative of Dickerson's willingness and ability to modify his style for specialized customer needs.

Light, supple rods like "Models 7011," "7612," "801510," "86E," and "901711" offer a delightful liveliness in contrast with the faster, more powerful models. Jim Payne made many fast rods like the "Model 98," but was known to have complemented them with lighter rods like the "Model 97." The H. L. Leonard Rod Company made the fast "H" (for heavy) series along with numerous, lighter rods. Unlike Payne and Leonard, Dickerson did not issue catalogs fully describing his rods. He was not located on the East Coast where most fishing writers and trend-setting fishermen lived, and he made a comparatively small number of rods. These factors, and perhaps some prejudice against

rods made too far west of the Hudson, seem to have contributed to a lack of appreciation even among bamboo-rod enthusiasts of the wide range of Dickerson rod actions.

By 1960 fiberglass rods were the current rage. Dickerson closed out his ledger, formally "retiring" at age 69. An increasing number of the rods he later made for friends and old customers, such as the "Model 7011," were wrapped without the black tipping. This change, which began in the mid-1950s, remains puzzling, as is Dickerson's use in the 1970s of varied-colored wrapping, including olive brown or red, as though he was using whatever silk he had handy.

Yet the last rods he is known to have completed, in 1972, were a unique "Model 7612" with each tip wound differently at the tip top to distinguish between them, and a "Model 7010," the lightest seven-foot rod Dickerson ever made. He was still experimenting and completing innovative rods at age 81, having started his career entirely on his own over forty years earlier, unlike Jim Payne or that generation of Leonard's who had grown up in their fathers' rod-making shops. After his "retirement" he also became an accomplished grandfather clockbuilder and gemstone jewelry maker. "The rods are a reflection of Pop," notes Glenn Dickerson, "Quite a guy."

What kind of man was Lyle Dickerson? Learning a great deal about the great rodmakers is challenging, because little in-depth information is available to researchers. For the most part, the rods have to speak for the men. Yet scores of conversations with Dickerson's customers, associates, and family present a consistent and convincing portrait of Dickerson throughout his adult life. He is remembered by acquaintances and intimates with remarkable respect and affection.

Hardly objective, but difficult not to take to heart are these reflections of his daughter, Jane (Dickerson) Rudolph,

He had a great natural curiosity that was not thwarted by over-strict or over-restrictive parents. In Bellaire he was free to roam and make friends with the townspeople at every level. He learned from the craftsmen—chatted with the professionals.

He read all the philosophers. He concluded that it was all gobbledegook, double talk, and became impatient with it. He read all the sciences—memorized his high school chemistry book cover to cover.

He ground his own lenses using instructions from a Harvard professor. Later he donated the telescope to the high school science department.

She remembers his dry humor in describing the bland process of reproduction in fish with the female laying her

eggs and the male separately fertilizing them, and his comment that this must be the origin of the expression "Poor Fish."

He was an intellectual being—loved music, especially opera and solo instruments. He loved the piano, tried to play, but never succeeded. He once went to Traverse City to buy a boat. He came home with a piano instead.

His memory was keen. He contributed to the historical record of his home town. He was the first president of the Bellaire Historical Society.

He was slight, but straight, agile. His speaking and singing voice was rich, clear, strong, but gentle. He never shouted, never used profanity.

He admired Bob Summers' craftsmanship. He liked Bob as a person. Though he admired Tim Bedford and his rods, his comments on Tim's first efforts at rod-building were, "Tim, you'd better go into the broomstick business."

People were his hobby. This "loner" was a thoroughly social being. He made an impression on everyone he met. He acquired his friends carefully and kept them throughout the years. Though the "loner" tag fits, and his impatience showed at times, his network of friends, contacts, and acquaintances was vast. He was never demanding of others. He was good to his wife and family, but could give us neither time nor money . . . I miss him very much.

Daughter-in-law Charlotte Golczynski Dickerson fills out the portrait in similar tones.

He was an independent man. I cannot imagine him working for or with another man. In fact, he had offers to enlarge and become a big rod manufacturer which he immediately turned down. He knew his rods would suffer, and money was not his goal.

Pop was not a humble man. He knew his worth and spent his life perfecting products that would speak for him in the world. He had a sense of history. He was not interested in making money. His goal was to accomplish excellence through his craft.

He did not suffer from a guilty conscience nor even the routine guilt we all suffer. It freed him to live with himself in such a natural comfort that if one did not understand him completely, they might have thought him arrogant. Neither was he the humble man his good manners might have implied. He had great dignity. He never did harm to a living soul. He did the best he could at what he did, and he was at peace with himself.

Pop was dear to me. I admired him, and I loved him.

#### His son Glenn emphasizes

. . . his analytical mind. When he directed his talents toward problem solving, the problems never had a chance.

He wouldn't be led by anything or anyone. But he willingly and happily flowed with events, through which he lived, step by step and stage by stage.



*Dickerson with son Glenn. Courtesy of the Dickerson family.*

Dickerson's son Burton describes him as

. . . very tough and opinionated, but quiet. He didn't speak unless it was sought out. He was very self-assured.

He fished but was never crazy about it. At casting tournaments he performed indifferently and didn't care. He got bored with fish stories.

Grandson Norm Dickerson sums him up: "He got done what he needed to with what he had."

Bob Summers calls him

. . . ingenious, a self-taught guy. There wasn't anything he couldn't build when it came to rods. It took a lot more ingenuity to make the machinery than it does to make a rod. He was probably the most thorough of anyone. He did a lot of it from the challenge to do these things. And he didn't do it to make a bunch of money.

Paul Young tried to get Dickerson to come to work for him and took him on fishing trips. "Dick" said, "I'll help you guys, but I won't come to work for you."

"Dick" was on the dry side and didn't fish too much. He was a good engineer and craftsman, an engineer and somewhat of an artist. Paul Young was probably a better fisherman, but the small details [of rodmaking] did not mean that much to him. I think Jim Payne cosmetically tried to be the most perfect of any of them.

Dickerson and Garrison were a lot alike in the vein of being engineers. But "Dick" went into it deeper than anyone. He did everything. Garrison used other people's ferrules.

Dickerson rods hold up pretty well. They were bought for working rods.

Yet Dickerson had no protégés, no young rodmakers to carry on his work. In fact none of Dickerson's children or grandchildren have made a profession, or even an avocation, of rodbuilding, though several have pursued careers involving art and craftsmanship, including Glenn, who is an accomplished woodworker, as was Dickerson's oldest son, John, who is now deceased. We can only speculate why rodmaking did not continue into the next generation as it did in rodmaking families like the Paynes, Leonards, Edwards, Youngs, Powells, and others.

Daughter Jane (Dickerson) Rudolph says that Lyle was close to his mother, but not to his father. The picture of Dickerson's family of origin (page 13) taken by Lyle on a timed exposure, might provide a clue. Dickerson's father, who worked long hours and died young, appears distant. Could Dickerson have been left somewhat deficient in what he got from him and thus uncomfortable

in providing for his sons?

When asked why they did not pursue rodmaking, Dickerson's sons point to their coming of age during World War II when Lyle had suspended his rod-making operations in favor of making munitions gauges to aid the war effort. Both sons stress that their father would have helped them, had they asked. Yet neither they nor his grandchildren approached him. "He never asked any of us, nor did we discuss it, hint, or suggest that one of us would like to become a rodmaker. That was his niche. We would

find our own," reports son Glenn.

Is it possible that Dickerson subtly communicated that he would not have been entirely at ease working intimately with the men in his family? Might this possibly uneasy affection for them have been channeled instead into Dickerson's remarkable dedication to creating and sharing such satisfying bamboo rods?

Certainly many of us have come to feel affection for Lyle Dickerson through our love of his work. Son Glenn, "Put a tool in his hand, and he could do it. That was what he was born to do: Take a tool

and materials and make something magnificent. The talent he had and the kind of man it took to be him—that comes along once in a generation. You don't inherit it."

Bob Summers compares Dickerson with other rodmakers, "Why are these rods worth the money people are paying for them? Because they were part of him. . . . He was the most real one of them all."

Few of us, indeed, few of the great rodmakers, have accomplished so much, or will be remembered so well. □

## Extant Lyle L. Dickerson Rods

LYLE DICKERSON'S TWO-VOLUME 1931-60 ledger lists 1,232 completed trout and salmon fly rods. Others were designated "bass" or "bonefish" rods, or as "bait-casting" or "spinning rods," or were sold "unfinished." At least a few rods must have been made prior to 1931 and several rods dated during the 1931-60 period were not recorded in the ledger. Perhaps these and some others were not recorded in error, or were made as gifts. Dickerson might have completed as many as 100 more rods at the urging of friends and old customers from 1960 through 1972, many of shorter lengths. It seems a reasonable estimate that Dickerson completed no more than 1,350 trout and salmon fly rods.

Exhaustive attempts have been made over several years to contact all members of the Dickerson family, old friends, customers and their surviving families, as well as museums, dealers, and collectors. All possible leads have been followed, turning up 299 Dickerson trout and salmon fly rods still in existence, their condition ranging from near new to near shambles. The model number, inscribed year of completion, and the original owner's name, if present, were recorded. Some rods were personally inspected, but most could only be discussed over the telephone. This information was then checked against the Dickerson ledger and, if necessary, with rodmakers knowledgeable about Dickerson, with previous owners of the rod in question, and with dealers who may have been involved in its sale. As one dealer candidly put it when asked if he was certain a rod he had sold was a Dickerson, "That's why I sold it!"

The "Dickerson Commemorative Series" of rods, made by J. W. Schaaf, uses darker cane than the original Dickersons and has designations on each rod section. Thus it has not been difficult to exclude them.

No questionable rod has been included. Only one "fake" Dickerson has turned up. It was so unmistakably incorrect—the owner volunteered that he had doubts—as to raise the question of whether the rod was an attempt at forgery, or only the work of an unskilled admirer.

Dickerson has the reputation for being a precise rodmaker. Yet most of the fifty rods personally inspected did not have all sections exactly the same length. The irregularities included:

- 1) One tip section was at least  $\frac{1}{8}$ " longer than the other on 28% of the rods.
- 2) The tip sections were from  $\frac{1}{4}$ " to 1"

shorter than the butt section on 4% of the rods. Yet when the rods were assembled, their full length was correct. Thus one "Model 7012," for example, measured exactly 7'0" in length, even though the tip sections were a full inch shorter than the butt section.

- 3) The tip sections were  $\frac{1}{4}$ " longer than the butt section on 18% of the rods.

- 4) The butt section was at least  $\frac{1}{4}$ " longer than the other sections on 17% of the rods.

- 5) The butt section was at least  $\frac{1}{4}$ " shorter than the other sections on 7% of the rods.

- 6) The mid-section was at least  $\frac{1}{4}$ " longer than the other sections on 4% of the rods.

- 7) The mid-section was at least  $\frac{1}{4}$ " shorter than the other sections on 7% of the rods.

None of these rods showed signs under magnification of having been repaired or re-wrapped. Of course it is possible that a few might have been repaired with such expertise as to be invisible—perhaps by Dickerson. Still, these findings strongly suggest that not all original Dickerson rods have all sections precisely the same length. Customers report that Dickerson discouraged them from ordering a new tip when an inch or two had been broken off, apparently because he felt the rods still cast well. Even his personal "Model 8013" had one broken tip. For Dickerson, intact function seems to have taken precedence over perfect form.

Completing this research has been demanding and lengthy, but enjoyable, largely because of the warmth and generosity of the remarkable Dickerson owners. Most have treasured their Dickersons over decades and taken loving care of them. Many rods have become family heirlooms linking generations of fishermen. The rods spoken of most glowingly, however, have been those which fisherman fathers passed on to their daughters. Enough owners have, nevertheless, generously agreed to donate their rods to the major fly fishing museums that each now has a good collection; though with over 150 Dickerson models to collect, there is room for further growth.

Still, there is no way of knowing how many wonderful Dickerson rods have been destroyed or lost, or how many more Dickersons exist than have been located. Those readers who have information about Dickerson or existing Dickerson rods can help answer these questions.

Most of the existing three-piece Dickersons were made before World War II, while most of the two-piece rods were made later using

the milling machine. Nearly all the shorter rods listed in the ledger—and many which were made later—have been located. Perhaps so many still exist because they are newer and may not have been fished as hard as the longer rods.

Only three rods under seven feet are recorded in the ledger. Inexplicably several were described as six-foot rods, though all three measured six and one-half feet in length. Two have been located, one of which is a two-piece "Model 6611" which has been donated to the American Museum of Fly Fishing by Tim Bedford, along with most of his collection. Fewer of the eight- to ten-foot rods have shown up. Hopefully they are out catching fish and not holding up tomato plants.

For the most common models, the table below indicates how many rods were listed in the ledger as being made between 1931 and 1960, and how many of each model have been found to exist today:

Model	Listed in ledger	Located
7011	3	8*
7012	8	15*
7612	29	8
7613	40	25
761510	85	10
801510	93	9
801611	20	6
8013	120	30
8014	103	27
8014 Guide	2	8**
8015 Guide	12	13*
Special		
861711	150	14
8615	23	7
9015	7	7
9016	47	12
901812	69	19
901913	9	6

\* Most of these rods seem to have been made after 1960 for those old customers who wanted to try the popular, shorter rods despite Dickerson's lack of enthusiasm for any fishing rod under eight feet in length. Such rods cannot be checked against the ledger for authentication.

\*\* It is not clear if more of these rods were made after 1960 or if many rods designated in the ledger as "Model 8014" were actually labeled as "8014 Guide."

G.S.S., M.D. & J.W.S.

# Livingston Stone Pioneer Fisheries Scientist

## His Career in California

by Frank E. Raymond



In our last issue, John Monnett introduced us to some of the angling history of Yellowstone Park. Continuing our western peregrinations, Frank E. Raymond, a writer/historian from California, examines an additional chapter of our rich western angling heritage, that of Livingston Stone's career as a pioneer fisheries scientist. D.S.J.

IN THE EARLY 1870s, when the culture of fish eggs by artificial means was in its infancy, Livingston Stone, Harvard graduate, native of Massachusetts with Plymouth Colony roots, and former Unitarian minister, was proprietor of Cold Springs Trout Ponds in Charlestown, New Hampshire. Stone's expertise in the then-new science of fish-egg culture led to his becoming editor of a fish culturist column in a New York newspaper and then to his appointment to the post of Deputy U. S. Fish Commissioner.

In July 1872 Stone was sent to California to collect Pacific chinook salmon eggs and introduce them in eastern waters to make up for fast-disappearing Atlantic salmon. The Pacific salmon did not adapt to eastern waters but it was Stone's 1872 trip to California that marked the beginning of historic Baird Hatchery on the McCloud River.

According to an article by Alice L. Sea-

mans, which appeared in *The Covered Wagon* and was later reprinted in the 1976 Shasta Historical Society yearbook, Stone reached San Francisco in late August 1872. Mrs. Seamans writes:

He traveled north to Red Bluff, the railroad terminus, then by stage to the Pitt River ferry. From there he walked up the river bank to the McCloud; two miles up that stream to the old Indian campsite and fishing grounds, afterwards called Baird. He and his two assistants reached this point August 30th and at once began building a house, hatchery, tanks and a flume.

Mrs. Seamans continues her story:

By the middle of September they began collecting eggs, although the best of the run was over. They took 50,000 eggs but only 7,000 arrived in good shape in the East.

Skipping to the following year, 1873, Mrs. Seamans mistakenly states that a railroad bridge over the Elkhorn River, Utah, gave way, dumping Stone and his companions in their aquarium car into the river. The railroad wreck actually occurred at *Nebraska's* Elkhorn River, just a few miles west of Omaha, on Sunday, June 8, 1873.

In the multiple headlines and lurid prose of the 1873 era, the *Omaha Herald* of Tuesday, June 10, tells the story of the "Wreck of the Celebrated California Aquarium Car":

### RAILROAD ACCIDENT

An Engine and One Car Breaks Through the Trestle-Work Near the Elkhorn on the Union Pacific

Roadmaster Carey Killed—Narrow Escape of Others

Wreck of the Celebrated California Aquarium Car

Personal Experiences of the Survivors

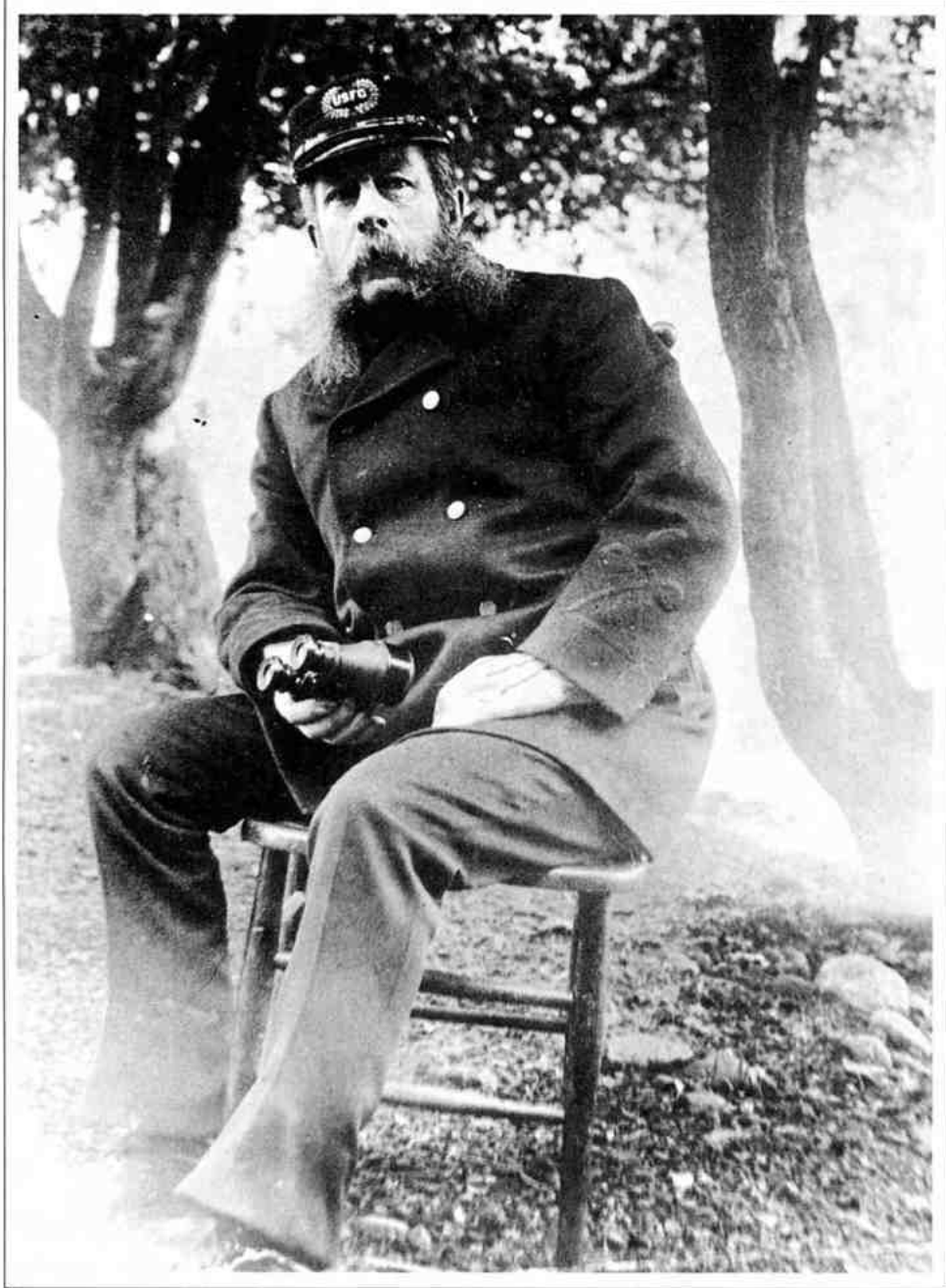
After describing the tragic death of Trainmaster Carey and interviewing the engineer, the reporter wrote:

The aquarium car came next and went down in the crash. It was occupied by Hon. Livingston Stone, United States Fish Commissioner, and two assistants. Mr. Stone described his part of the terrible scene to a *Herald* reporter, as follows:

"Three of us were in the forward end of the car. It was fitted up expressly for our use in this enterprise, and had in it two tons of ice in cakes of two hundred pounds each, and a dozen or more tanks weighing from one hundred to one thousand pounds each. We were just taking dinner.

"I had reached out my hand for a cup of tea when we felt a shake and a crash. Then water began to come into the car and raise the ice and other articles in it.

"That was our salvation. If it had not been for the water we would have been



*Livingston Stone, Harvard graduate, former Unitarian Minister, and founder of Baird Hatchery on California's McCloud River in 1872. As Deputy U.S. Fish Commissioner, Stone spent 25 years as Superintendent of Baird Hatchery, 1872 to 1897.*

crushed instantly. The car had to fill with water before it could sink, and that gave us about five seconds to get out. We went out head first. One time . . . I felt the water closing up around my face. Then I thought I was lost and fully expected to drown there. Then I saw a gleam of light—the door opened—it was my only chance and I took it. The water was deep, far over our heads, and we three escaped by swimming around the car and climbing on the engine. The motion of the car also helped us or probably we would have not been able to get out so quick."

#### ABOUT THE FISH

There were twelve varieties of fish in the tank which had been taken from the Cold Springs Trout Ponds at Charlestown, New Hampshire, by Mr. Stone, who was in this enterprise acting for the fish commissioners of California. They comprised varieties which would have been new to California waters, and the shipwreck of the enterprise will be much regretted by the people of that State who long to see again the fish that they were familiar with in boyish days in their old eastern homes.

The fish were in excellent condition on their arrival at this city, and there is no doubt that the enterprise would have been a complete success but for this untimely accident.

Additional details are provided by two rare documents in the collection of Joseph W. Cooper, Kentfield, California: "United States Commission of Fish and Fisheries—Report to the Commissioner for 1873-4 and 1874-5" and "General Report of Investigations on the McCloud River Drainage in 1938," by J. H. Wales, Bureau of Fish Conservation, California Division of Fish and Game.

In his "Report to the Commissioner," Livingston Stone reported sending telegrams about the wreck to S. R. Throckmorton, chairman of the California fish-commissioners and to Hon. Spencer F. Baird, head of the U.S. Fish Commission at Washington. Baird instructed Stone to return east immediately with his assistants, and take a shipment of young shad to California under the auspices of the United States Fish Commission.

Stone's trip west with forty thousand young shad packed in eight ten-gallon cans of water is detailed in the "Report to the Commissioner." Beginning on June 25, only seventeen days after the Nebraska train wreck, the trip culminated on the Sacramento River at the village of Tehama. There at 9 p.m., July 2, 1873, the 35,000 shad from the Hudson River, New York, "were deposited safely and in good order in the Sacramento River. . . ."

Those shad have thrived in the Sacramento and other West Coast streams beyond all expectations. Today, 117 years later, the annual spawning run of shad provides exciting late spring fishing, particularly for the fly fisherman. The peak of the shad run usually occurs close to Memorial Day, and one of the favorite fishing spots is located on the Sacramento River at Woodson Bridge State Recreation Area, just a short distance down stream from Tehama where the shad from New York's Hudson River were first planted in 1873. Will shad roe, a gourmet treat for Bostonians, ever become popular with Californians?

One intriguing aspect of Livingston Stone's 100-page "Report on Operations in California in 1873" was the pioneer ingenuity displayed by Stone and his two companions, W. H. Perrin and Myron Green, who accompanied him on his aquarium car trips from east to west.

It should be noted that Stone's California adventures began a scant four years *after* the driving of the Golden Spike at Promontory, Utah, on the Union Pacific Railroad which linked Omaha and San Francisco, May 10, 1869, and three years *before* General George Custer's ignominious defeat in June 1876 at the hands of the Sioux at the Battle of Little Big Horn.

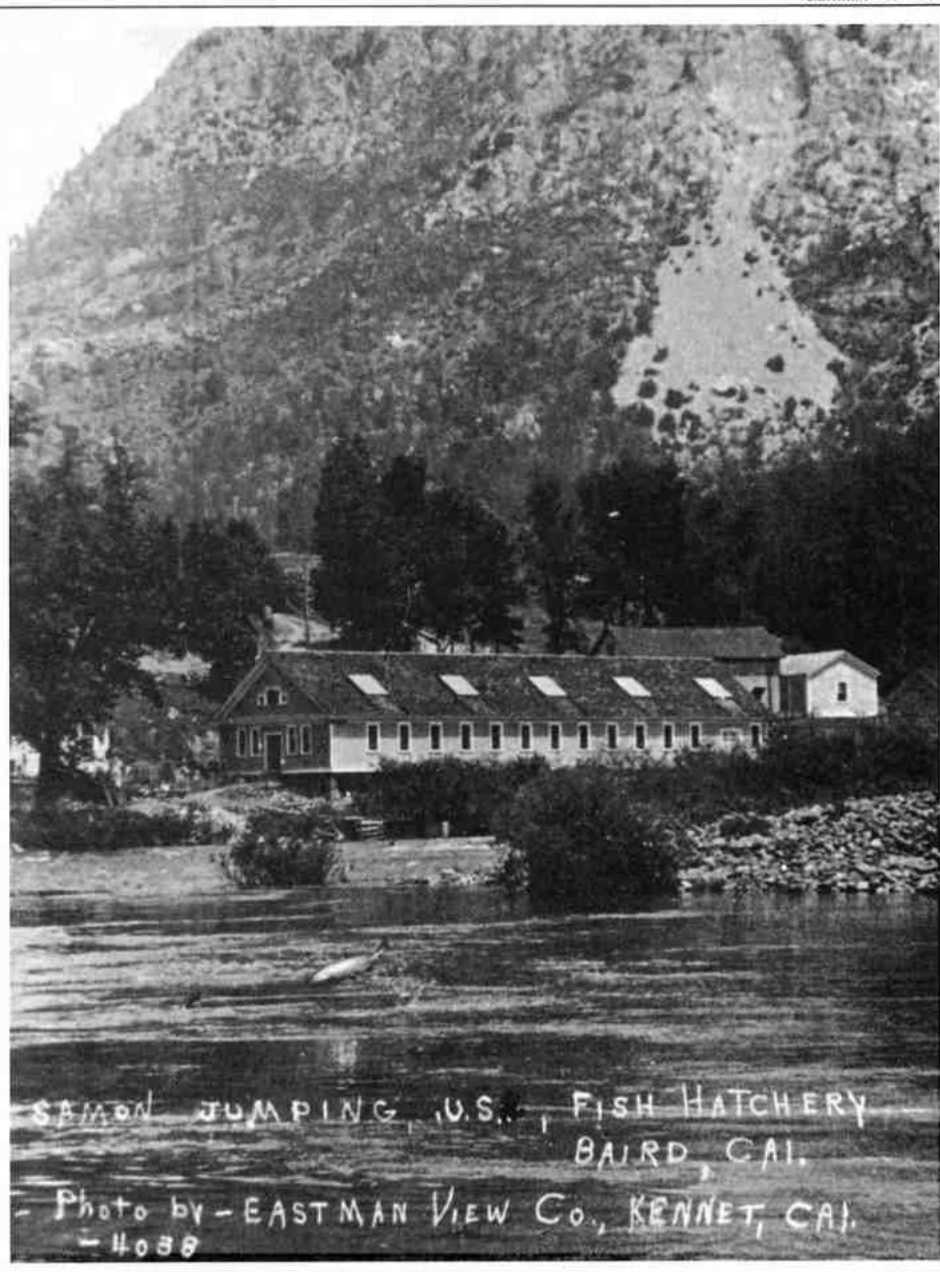
From a historical viewpoint, it is pertinent to recall that the 1870s were long before the development of such conveniences as thermostatically controlled temperatures, electrical refrigeration and heating appliances and, quite probably, even the manufacture of artificial ice. The old-fashioned stone ice-house, where ice cut from a lake or river in winter was stored between layers of sawdust during summer months, was still the norm.

That is why Stone and his two assistants were faced with unusual problems of temperature control during the second aquarium car's journey from Castleton-on-the-Hudson in New York to Sacramento. The cargo of young shad demanded a temperature range of 62° to 75° F., yet they would be traveling some three thousand miles with outside temperatures ranging from 100° in Chicago to well below freezing after leaving Ogden, Utah. This demanded taking on many tons of ice as well as fresh water, some hot, some cold, at railroad stations en route. Stone requested that the train crew with the second aquarium car stop at the site of the June 8 train wreck that had dumped Stone and his cargo of fish and companions into the Elkhorn River. Stone wrote:

We left Omaha on the Union Pacific road at 3 o'clock on Saturday [their journey began the previous Wednesday in New York] with the fish in excellent order. Through the courtesy of Mr. C. B. Havens, the Union Pacific train-dispatcher, I was permitted to stop the train at the Elkhorn River, where the aquarium-car accident happened to take on a reserve of river water at that point. . . .

On arriving at the Elkhorn River, the train stopped, and we took on a full reserve of fifty gallons of the river water. The river was somewhat roily, and the temperature was 84° to 85°, but the water tasted good and soft; and, by a singular coincidence, it proved to be the best for the shad that we found on the road.

The river that had swallowed up so unsparingly the car load of California fish



*The Baird Hatchery on California's McCloud River. The original hatchery site now lies beneath the waters of Lake Shasta. (Note the leaping salmon.) Courtesy Shasta Historical Society Collection.*

thus contributed more than any other toward assisting the shad across safely to that State.

Stone detailed the many changes of water required during the long trip from east to west. During the first half of the trip the water was changed every two hours and every hour during the last half. That amounted to almost a thousand changes during the seven-day journey. The labor, Stone said, was almost incessant, ". . . like walking a thousand miles in a thousand hours."

The water-changing chore was split into three eight-hour shifts, between

Stone and his two assistants, Perrin and Green.

As the journey progressed across the Rocky Mountains and then the Sierra Nevada, problems of temperature control in the vessels of shad fry also increased. A stop was made at Ogden to deliver five thousand shad for release into the Jordan River near its outlet into the Great Salt Lake. Then the temperature of the shad containers dropped to 65°, within 3° of the danger point. Stone explained:

. . . Mr. Perrin, on discovering that there was no stove in the Central Pacific express



*The guest house at the Baird Hatchery. Courtesy Shasta Historical Society Collection.*

car, with admirable foresight went into the kitchen of the depot restaurant, and procured permission to heat some water on the stove, by which we obtained eight gallons of hot water and got a good start. . . .

. . . it being my night for sleep, I, having been up the greater part of the night previous, retired, leaving Mr. Green to remain on duty till midnight, and Mr. Perrin from midnight till daylight, when I was to go on again.

Mr. Perrin and Mr. Green deserve the entire credit of taking the shad through the critical night that followed, and for an account of it I will quote from Mr. Perrin's journal:

*Perrin's Journal:*

As we left Ogden on Monday evening, it became evident that we should need hot water during the night . . . Mr. Stone made arrangements to heat water, if necessary, in the postal car, where there was a stove, but after he went back to the sleeping car, the man in charge of the mailcar came to us and said that they were very busy and did not see how they could have a fire in the car. So Mr. Green went into the engine-cab and persuaded the engineer to heat some iron couplings in the furnace of the engine, and then put them when red hot into our pails filled with water.

. . . When Mr. Green woke me up at 12

o'clock, the air in the car was cold, and growing colder. . . . At the first stopping-place, I went forward to the engine, but found that at that place they changed engines and also engineers.

The new engineer hardly understood the case, and was at first unwilling to do what I desired. The conductor, too, seemed averse to any delay, and was not very pliable; but after a statement of our necessities they both consented, and I was to go forward for hot water at the next stop. This I did, and obtained hot water heated in the way I have described. . . . at 2:30 a.m. the temperature of the car was about 52°, and the water in the cans about 63°, and of course, going down. . . . The train stopped, and I ran forward, and after the engineer heard my case, he told me that they were going to stop for water in about twenty minutes, and then he would let me have another supply of warm water. About 3 a.m. the train stopped, and I went forward, and the engineer took out the hot irons and heated the water, and I was enabled to keep the water up to the right temperature until we reached Toano, where I got another supply.

In this way I got through the night without letting the temperature fall below 62°; of course, it kept me almost constantly at work.

Mr. Stone concluded the report of train travels with:

About sunrise on the morning of Wednesday, July 2, our last day, we crossed the summit of the Sierra Nevada, and began descending the Pacific slope into California; the water in the cans now standing at 65° to 66°. At 9 o'clock we took on twenty gallons of good water, with a temperature of 60°, at Alta, California, and arrived at Sacramento City at half-past one Wednesday afternoon, with the shad as fresh and lively as when they left the Hudson River a week before. It seemed like a miracle!

After the shad were ceremoniously deposited in the Sacramento River on the evening of Wednesday, July 2, 1873, the next stop was the camp on the McCloud River, established the year before.

Now Stone and company would have much more to do than keeping a cargo of shad alive and healthy. They would have the then-free-flowing McCloud to tame, a hatchery with flume and water-wheel to build, plus a dwelling for the crew, and the Wintu Indians to convince that the white man should be permitted to take eggs from the salmon which had traditionally been theirs for centuries.

Stone wrote, after getting established at camp on August 6:

Our camp now consists of John G. Woodbury, foreman; Myron Green, head fish-

erman; Oliver Anderson, man of all work; George Allen, carpenter; Benjamin Eaton, steward; A. Leschinsky, fisherman; J. Leschinsky, fisherman; Livingston Stone, in charge; Indians, Lame Ben, Uncle John, One-Eyed Jim, and others.

Stone's report, which followed, concerned construction of the hatchery and the taking and shipping of the salmon eggs, packed between layers of moss gathered from the springs at Mt. Shasta, the source of the Sacramento River. That year, 1873, the crew gathered two million salmon eggs which were shipped east by railroad express. They went to Bloomsbury, New Jersey; Marietta, Pennsylvania; Seth Green in Rochester, New York; Middletown, Connecticut; Cold Springs Trout Ponds, Charlestown, New Hampshire; Winchester, Massachusetts; Bucksport, Maine; Salt Lake City, Utah; Niles, Michigan; plus a shipment to Dr. W. A. Newell, in San Francisco.

Stone also listed items shipped to the Smithsonian Institution in Washington: salmon and trout and eggs; lizards (local name, salamanders); grilse; tule matting, material from which Indian baskets are made; hat or basket by McCloud Indians; spear points, made of ankle bone of deer, used by McCloud Indians for spearing salmon; Manzanita berries and flour made from them; a plume worn by Indian Dick, who murdered Mr. Crooks, a white settler on the McCloud; water ouzel's nest, and many other unusual specimens.

Stone told of the party's exploring the caves in the depths of Persephone Mountain. They were guided on that exploration by Dr. Silverthorne, a long-time resident of the area who lived with his Wintu Indian wife on Cow Creek, seven miles from the hatchery camp. Stone named the caverns Baird Caves, in honor of Dr. Spencer F. Baird, U.S. Commissioner of Fisheries in Washington. Today the caves are a major tourist attraction and are known as Shasta Caverns. The mammoth granite mountain in which the caves lie is reached by a ferry across the McCloud arm of Shasta Lake. Mount Persephone (more commonly known as Gray Rocks) can be considered an appropriate monument to the now-gone Baird Hatchery, to the Wintu Indians who worked there, and to Livingston Stone who befriended the Wintu people and furnished them with salmon after eggs were processed and shipped to Eastern states. All vestiges of Old Baird are now beneath the waters of Shasta Lake.

During the 1874 spawning season Stone and crew continued to gather salmon eggs and to ship them east. New destinations for the eggs, in addition to those listed previously, were: Anamosa, Iowa; St. Paul, Minnesota; W. A. Newell,

for New Zealand; Boscobel, Wisconsin; New Hope, Pennsylvania; Providence, Rhode Island; Newcastle, Ontario, Canada; Cattaraugus County, New York; Bangor, Maine; Georgetown, Colorado; Rockford, Illinois; and Lynchburg, Virginia. That totaled twenty-three different destinations to which salmon eggs had been shipped during 1873 and 1874. Four million eggs were shipped in 1874.

Mr. Stone also recorded the shipment of a second aquarium car from Charlestown, New Hampshire, in 1874. This shipment, consigned to the California Fish Commission, arrived in San Francisco in good shape, after a nine-day journey. Stone can be credited with the introduction of shad, striped bass, and catfish to California waters.

Beginning in 1874 a change in the operation of the McCloud River fishery began, marked by a growing emphasis on the gathering of rainbow trout eggs and some declining interest in salmon propagation.

This change should be credited largely to Jeremiah Blizzard Campbell, who lived eight miles upstream from Baird at what was later named Campbell Creek. Campbell was married to a Wintu woman, Mary Pu Chalokeme. They had five children, including son Joseph who worked at the Baird Hatchery during boyhood, when the facility was being rebuilt after the disastrous flood of 1881.

Jeremiah Campbell wrote to Professor Spencer F. Baird, U.S. Commissioner of Fish and Fisheries, on May 6, 1881. His letter was published in the bulletin of the Commission under the title: "Notes on McCloud River, California . . . Based Upon a Letter of J. B. Campbell. . ."

Sir: . . . Four miles above the fishery is the trout-rearing establishment, of which Mr. Myron Green is superintendent. . . . Three miles from the trout pond, on the west side of the river, is a small farm belonging to Henry Mirey. One mile above Mirey's place is the home of the writer, consisting of a nice orchard and garden on the east side of the river, together with a beautiful creek that does not vary more than 4 degrees during the winter, and ranges from 53 to 57 degrees during the summer.

Campbell then proceeds to describe the fish found in the McCloud:

The fifth is the red-sided trout, or, as it is called in New York, the rainbow trout. I will mention only its habits, as you have undoubtedly seen many of them. It feeds almost entirely on the bottom of the river, but will take a fly through March, April, and part of May, as the river is then literally alive with insects. . . .

Any time you should desire further particulars, send me a letter and I will answer it with pleasure. I have been writing to Seth Green for over two years, and have given him full particulars concerning the fish of this region and their habits.

If you want to know how the McCloud trout thrive in New York you can apply to him, as I have supplied him with all that he has got from that river. He took some spawn from them this season. . . .

. . . I have watched the salmon and the trout during their spawning more than any other man in this part of the country, as I have fished a great deal, and have been fishing longer than any one who takes any interest in the matter. I came here in 1855; I have caught hundreds and probably thousands.

As has become evident from the above quotes from Campbell's letter, he was an early-day expert on the McCloud River and its fish and was probably the first person to offer the McCloud River trout an artificial fly. And, as J. H. Wales, formerly of the California Department of Fish and Game, wrote for *The Covered Wagon* of the Shasta County Historical Society in 1946:

We know that he shipped eggs as early as 1874, and so far as the records go, these were the first rainbow trout eggs to leave the West Coast. Until that time this fish was found nowhere else in the world and Campbell may be called the father of rainbow trout distribution. Since that time eggs of these fish have been sent around the world and have, unlike the salmon, become established in many foreign lands as well as in a large part of the United States. . . .

It is most fitting that Joseph Campbell should have been like his father, associated all his life with the McCloud River rainbow trout. This close association became most apparent when this writer accompanied Mr. Campbell on a fishing trip. The trout apparently considered it a special favor to find refuge in Mr. Campbell's creel.

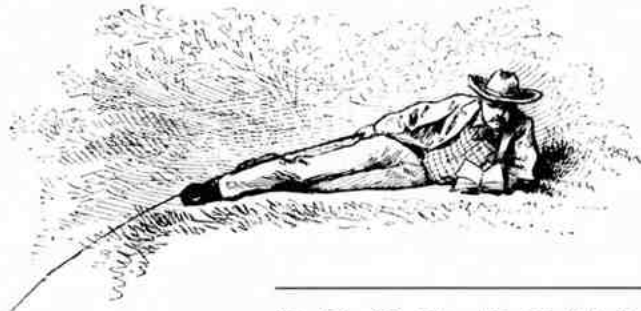
Joseph Campbell became a guide on the deluxe McCloud River Club. For many years he had been guide, confidant, and counselor to members of the club, and an honored guest at the club's annual San Francisco dinner—an event that Campbell looked forward to with much pleasure. Joseph Campbell died in 1946; his funeral was held in Redding on November 1, following traditional Indian rites held the night before at his old Stillwater home. Joseph's father had died on January 25, 1920, at his home on Campbell Creek, where it entered the McCloud.

Mrs. Alice L. Seamans concludes her tribute to Livingston Stone and the Baird Hatchery:

After leaving Baird [in 1897], Mr. Stone took charge of a hatchery at Cape Vincent, New York, where he remained for nine years. He retired at the age of seventy, after forty years in the service of American fish culture.

Stone had spent twenty-five of those years at Baird, a place he had grown to love. □





## BOOK REVIEW

### Izaak Walton: A New Bibliography, 1653-1987

by Rodolphe L. Coigney (James Cummins: New York, 1989. 434 pages, hardcover, illustrated. \$150.)

IZAAK WALTON WAS PRIMARILY a bait fisherman (maggots and grasshoppers being among his favorites); his cast-iron prose and the wooden dialogue among his characters—Piscator, Venator and Auceps—fall on the ears of modern-day readers with numbing dullness. In addition, he was an unblushing plagiarist, adopting the form of and much of the text from *The Arte of Angling*, written by William Samuel and published in 1577, some seventy-six years before the first printing of *The Compleat Angler* in 1653.

As a fishing manual, it is of little value to present-day anglers, except perhaps for Part II, a dissertation on fly fishing written by Walton's young friend and fishing companion, Charles Cotton, which was added to the fifth edition in 1676.

How then to account for the fact that *The Compleat Angler* is the third most reprinted book in English in publishing history, topped only by the Bible and *Pilgrim's Progress*? Since that first, 1653, printing, no fewer than 456 editions have been issued, plus uncounted foreign translations. In its 337 years, at no time has the book been out of print. And there is little likelihood that it ever will be; new editions continue to roll off the presses regularly.

Why? Walton wrote several biographies, none of which have remained in demand nor are much remembered. Yet *The Compleat Angler* is regarded as a classic of English literature—an honor to which no other book on sport can lay claim. Though largely useless as an angling guide—even Cotton's contributions have been pretty well outdated—the secret of its success might lie in the words of Charles Lamb: "It will sweeten a man's temper at any time he reads it."

One of the effects of this Waltonian interest has been to foster a fervor for collecting editions and copies of the *Angler* by bibliophiles throughout the world. Of course, no one can become a

serious collector without a reliable guide; the two guides most relied on have been Peter Oliver's *A New Chronicle Of The Compleat Angler*, published in 1936, and the 1970 volume *The Compleat Angler 1653-1967* by Bernard Horne.

Now, nineteen years later, comes *Izaak Walton: A New Bibliography, 1653-1987*, by Dr. Rodolphe L. Coigney, published by James Cummins, New York, in 1989. In his introduction to the book, A. J. McClane writes, "Rudy Coigney has superb credentials, not only in the medical field (he was Director of the World Health Organization) but as an inveterate angler and as a student of angling literature." McClane adds that he finds the Coigney compendium more valuable than either Oliver's or Horne's.

McClane also notes that the Coigney collection may well be the largest collection of *The Compleat Angler* in the world, consisting of 800 volumes representing 411 of the known 456 known editions, beginning with the first 1653 edition. Bound in plain brown sheepskin, it lacked Walton's name as author.

In his listings, Coigney doesn't limit himself to simple cataloguing; he furnishes details of interest to collectors. Misprints, misspellings, typographical errors, variations among specific editions, and other peculiarities are noted and commented on. Descriptions of bindings, illustrations and illustrators, and volume sizes are among the valuable ephemera included. Of special value to collectors are the numerous photographs of covers, title pages, and first pages of various editions, which include foreign editions.

This may not be a book for the average angler or casual collector, but it certainly would prove invaluable to serious collectors, scholars and libraries. It is likely to remain the definitive guide to *The Compleat Angler* for the foreseeable future and, in time, surely will itself become a collector's item among Walton aficionados, who will recognize the debt owed Dr. Coigney for the time, effort, and intelligence that went into the work.

JOE PISARRO

Illustration from *Canoe and Camera* by Thomas Sedgwick Steel (Orange Judd Co., New York, 1880).

## The American Museum of Fly Fishing

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

### JOIN!

Membership Dues (per annum\*)

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

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

### SUPPORT!

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

### VISIT!

Summer hours (May 1 through October 31) are 10 to 4. Winter hours (November 1 through April 30) are weekdays 10 to 4.

We are closed on major holidays.

### BACK ISSUES!

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

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

# Museum Giftshop



Our popular t-shirts are made of 100% pre-shrunk cotton in the USA. Specify color (navy or cream), and size (S, M, L, XL). \$10 each, plus \$1.50 postage and handling.



These beautiful 10-oz. double old-fashioned glasses are made of hefty 24% lead crystal and deeply etched with the museum's logo and slogan. \$47.50 for a set of four, plus \$4 postage and handling.



Our pewter pin (left), measures 1" h x 1/2" w and features our logo in silver on an olive-green background. Our fully embroidered patch (3 1/2" h x 3" w), is silver and black on a Dartmouth Green twill background. Both are \$5 each, plus \$1 postage and handling.

Please make checks and money orders payable to: The American Museum of Fly Fishing, and send to: AMFF, P.O. Box 42, Manchester, VT 05254. MasterCard, Visa, and American Express accepted. Call 802-362-3300.



# Museum News

ON THE ROAD TO national museum accreditation: We've added a full-time professional curator and a summer intern to our staff. Our Development Committee meets in Boston to prepare a major fund-raising campaign, and we see great improvement in our all-important dinner/auction program. Five new trustees join our Museum family, a Museum Festival Weekend is scheduled, and we watch as AMFF's exhibits and special exhibitions program flourishes. What was it Robert Louis Stevenson said? "In the joy of the actors lies the sense of any action."

## Museum Welcomes Two New Staff Members

We take great pleasure in announcing the return of Alanna D. Fisher to our Museum family. Alanna, formerly the Museum's Registrar from 1985 to 1987, was recently appointed as the Museum's new Curator/Development Assistant.

Although she has lived and worked in Vermont for many years, Alanna originally hails from the Midwest. She was born and raised on the northwest side of Chicago and attended Alvernia High School, and Rosary College, in River Forest, Illinois, where she graduated with a B.A. in Sociology.

Alanna has wide experience in teaching, social work, and as a librarian. In fact, she once worked for two years as a library assistant at the Indian Institute of Technology in Kanpur, India. Nor is she a stranger to the world of fly fishing, having worked as assistant editor and manager of special services for *Fly Fisherman* magazine, and as an administrative assistant for *The Angler's Calendar*.

Alanna and her husband Jim now live

in a renovated "sugar house," which they designed and restored themselves, in Rupert, Vermont. They share their nineteen acres with their dog and two cats; Alanna tends a large garden in season, while Jim makes maple syrup each spring. Both are involved in community activities, especially the local volunteer fire department.

Alanna's primary duties at the Museum will be collections management (no small task as anyone who has seen our "new accessions" storage area will attest), and assisting in the planning and implementation of several new Museum development/outreach programs. She arrives on the scene at an important time in the Museum's history, and we're confident that she will be playing a major role in many of our exciting plans for the renovation of our spaces, new exhibits, and expanded programming. Alanna's back where her heart belongs, and we could not be happier.

Doris McCombs



Doug McCombs

Among a number of recent "firsts" at the Museum, we now add yet another: our first Museum intern. Douglas McCombs, a graduate student in the Public History program at Kent State University, in Kent, Ohio, will be joining our staff for a two-month stint this summer. While here, Doug will be given the opportunity to learn the ins and outs of a museum's operation, from collections management to exhibits preparation to producing a journal. In short, we want Doug to get a good sense of what this museum, and indeed, the museum profession itself, is all about.

Doug has lived and worked in Hubbard, Ohio, for twenty-five years. He received a B.A. in International Economics from Westminster College, a

Margot Page



Alanna Fisher

small school located in the pastoral community of New Wilmington, Pennsylvania. One of Doug's favorite trout streams, Neshannock Creek, flows right through the town. When not attending graduate school, Doug can usually be found working at the Stambaugh-Thompson Company as a design coordinator, or fly fishing, hiking or sketching.

Doug will arrive in late June, midway through our busy summer season. And if it's true that our staff will be helping to lay some of the groundwork for his future career in the museum profession, we are also well aware that Doug's talents will be greatly appreciated by AMFF in this exciting time of growth and change. Welcome aboard, Doug.

Joe Pisarro



Curt Gowdy, legendary sportscaster/angler, was the keynote speaker at AMFF's 1989 Boston dinner/auction.

## On the Dinner/Auction Circuit

The lynchpin of our fund-raising efforts? Our dinner/auction program. The Museum now hosts eight dinner/auctions across the country, from Boston to San Francisco. All revenues generated at these functions benefit the Museum's general operating fund and help make possible a wide array of Museum projects and programs.

One might call our dinner/auction program a critical success these days. Net proceeds have doubled in most cities, and tripled in others. In our hometown, Manchester, Vermont, we've increased net revenues 100% in two years, from \$3,000 to \$13,000.

The key to the resurgence of this program is simply put: outstanding support from the Museum's membership. Attendance has increased significantly at most dinners, and we can't say enough about the yeoman efforts of our volunteer dinner committees who put in hundreds of hours organizing and running these events. Our 1990 dinner/auction schedule is printed below. For more infor-

mation on specific times and locations, please contact a member of the Museum staff.

May 22—Cleveland, OH

June 2—Manchester, VT

October 18—Boston, MA

November 1—Hartford, CT

November 15—Philadelphia, PA

December 4—San Francisco, CA

## Highlights of AMFF's Annual Meeting

A record twenty-three Museum trustees from across the country assembled in San Francisco on December 5, 1989 for our annual Membership and Trustees' Meetings and Dinner/Auction at the St. Francis Yacht Club, near the Golden Gate Bridge. Although the scars of the earthquake that had hit the area just weeks before were everywhere in evidence, all services had been restored prior to the start of our meetings. Our San Francisco area trustees and volunteers had worked doubly hard preparing for what would prove to be one of the most important Trustees' Meetings to be held in years. Herewith, a brief overview:

### Executive Director's Report

In summarizing his report to the trustees, AMFF Executive Director Don Johnson noted that AMFF's dinner/auction program for 1989 had been a huge success, surpassing the figures for our outstanding 1988 program, and often doubling or tripling the net and gross figures for 1987. Don reported that AMFF's volunteer program had grown dramatically both in-house and around the country, that AMFF had sponsored or co-sponsored exhibitions in nine cities, that AMFF's collections continued to expand, and that several dormant trustee committees had been reactivated, and trustee participation had increased dramatically as well.

### Museum Publications

The Museum, in cooperation with the Amscot Group and artist John Swan, published a special limited-edition print in 1989 entitled "Lost Pool" and came close to completing the text, photography and illustrations for a trade publication called *A Treasury of Reels*, a museum-quality catalog and a holistic history of the fly reel, by Jim Brown. A limited edition of *A Treasury of Reels* might also be published in 1990 as well. Additionally, a new publication on the life and times of Mary Orvis Marbury

and AMFF's Marbury fly plate/photography collection by Trustee Susan Popkin, of Philadelphia, was approved.

### Museum Expansion/Renovation

Plans were unveiled for the expansion and general rehabilitation of the Museum's interior spaces. Since the Museum currently has only approximately 1000 square feet of public exhibition space, a program of expansion was seen as the key to attracting greater numbers of visitors, increased funding, and publicity. It was resolved that the American Museum of Fly Fishing should embrace a program for the expansion and renovation of the Museum's interior spaces in 1990.

### 1990 Budget

A budget of \$270,000 was approved for the coming fiscal year, up \$30,000 from 1989. \$20,000 of this increase will fund the salary of a full-time professional curator. It was noted that the Museum made some significant advances during 1989 in improving its financial posture.

### 1990 Annual Meeting

It was resolved that the 1990 Annual Meeting of the American Museum of Fly Fishing would be held in Manchester, Vermont, on Monday, October 22, 1990.

### Priorities for 1990

The trustees agreed that the Museum has passed through a rather difficult period of restructuring, and that it was now time to look ahead to increased professionalism and growth. As a first step, a full-time curator would be added to AMFF's staff. The timely publication of the Museum's journal, the formation of a highly motivated Development Committee, the expansion of the Museum's interior spaces, and the addition of a museum intern during 1990 were all seen as high priorities for the coming year.

## Six New Trustees Elected at Annual Meeting

George Dow



Bruce Begin

**Bruce H. Begin** received his B.A. from the State University of New York and his M.A. from New York University. He has wide experience in the fields of education and human services, and is today the Director of the Office of Development at Proctor Academy in Andover, New Hampshire, where he also serves as a student advisor, dormitory parent, and basketball coach. Bruce and his wife Nancy, a teacher and artist at Proctor Academy, have two sons, Jason and Matthew. Bruce currently serves as the Chairman of the Museum's Development Committee.

Gordon Allen



Peter Corbin

**Peter Corbin**, born and raised in northern New Jersey, graduated with high honors from Wesleyan University, and later attended the California College of Arts and Crafts. An artist of distinction, Peter's work can be found in the collections of the Leigh Yawkey Woodson Art Museum, the National Art Museum of Sport, and in the Presidential Collection at the White House. Soon after his highly acclaimed one-man exhibition at the Museum last summer, Peter started his own firm, the Shooter's Hill Press, and has already published four limited-edition sporting prints. Peter, wife Lillian, and their two children live in Millbrook, New York.

S. M. Photo



Larry Gilsdorf

**Larry Gilsdorf** first became interested in our museum in 1981, when he was introduced to trustee Art Frey, who happened to live two miles away from him

on the San Francisco peninsula. Since then, Larry, and his friends and fellow trustees Art Frey and Sam Van Ness, have been active in all of the Museum's West Coast activities, especially our highly successful annual dinner/auction. Long a collector of angling artifacts, Larry has fished in Europe, New Zealand, Alaska, and Mexico, where he fishes for his favorite species, dorado. This is Larry's second term as an AMFF trustee.

**Woods King III** holds a B.A. from Washington and Lee University and a J.D. from Cleveland State University, and is a principal of the Buckley, King and Bluso Company, L.P.A., a law firm located in Cleveland, Ohio. A member of the Atlantic Salmon Federation and Trout Unlimited, Woods is the chairman of the Museum's Cleveland Dinner/Auction Committee.

Earl Worsham



Marty Kline

**Martin D. Kline**, of Atlanta, Georgia, grew up in the Florida Keys where he first started fly fishing. He earned his B.A. at the University of Miami and holds a J.D. from Florida State University. He is currently the executive director of his own firm, Physicians Service Association, a banking group formed in 1973. Martin is a trustee of Trout Unlimited's Living Brightwater Trust, and is active in the Atlantic Salmon Federation, the Federation of Fly Fishers, and other conservation groups. He and his wife Linda frequently fish the Test in

Pamela Murray



Wally Murray

England, as well as water in Central America, Canada, and across the United States.

**Wallace J. Murray III**, of Hartford, Connecticut, is a native of East Greenwich, Rhode Island. He earned both his graduate and undergraduate degrees from the University of Rhode Island following a six-year tour in the U.S. Navy, during which he logged over 100,000 miles at sea. Wally is a member of Trout Unlimited, and a board member and education chair of the Connecticut Fly Fisherman's Association. Wally and his wife Pam are also members of the Museum's Manchester, Boston and Hartford Dinner/Auction Committees.

## Museum Festival Weekend

Members and friends of AMFF gathered to participate in our first Museum Festival Weekend on June 1-3 in Manchester, Vermont. We opened the Festival on Friday, June 1st at 6:30 p.m., with a special preview of a major angling and sporting art exhibition entitled "Time On the Water," featuring original works by John Swan, one of our great sporting artists, and the Atlantic Salmon Federation "Artist of the Year" for 1990. Museum members will remember John as the artist who painted our most recent limited-edition print, "Lost Pool." "Time On the Water" will remain open through October 31st.

On Saturday evening, June 2nd, members and friends attended AMFF's annual Gala Dinner/Auction at the historic Equinox Hotel. Our annual Manchester dinner has become one of the most popular Museum events, and certainly rates as one of the best fundraisers on AMFF's auction circuit around the country. As an added attraction, a bamboo fly rod owned and used by Glenn Miller, one of the greats of the Big Band Era of the late 1930s and early 1940s, was presented to our museum during the evening. This unique and historically valuable rod will be added to AMFF's permanent collection and displayed in our Manchester galleries for the remainder of 1990.

On Sunday, June 3rd, the Museum opened its doors to the public for behind-the-scenes tours, and fly-tying instruction and demonstrations by (among others) Mike Martineck, Kevin McEnerney, Ron Lewis, Mark Waslick, Bob Veverka, and Bill Chandler. Meanwhile, visitors enjoyed refreshments on the Museum's lawn while watching fly-casting demonstrations by such experts as Tom Rosenbauer and Dick Finlay. Nearly 300 people attended Sunday's events which also featured a lucrative lawn sale. □

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## LETTERS

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### Crosby Postcard

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Really enjoyed *The American Fly Fisher* (Fall 1989) issue just received. Especially liked Thomas A. Verde's article ["Diana of the Rangeleys"]. Perhaps I can add a little to the photo on page 11. Apparently it was a famous photo, as a postcard was made from it, in color. The caption under the photo reads "In the shadow of Mt. Kineo Published for G.W. Morris, Portland, Maine."



The sender of the card wrote, "Shall be up this Spring Tom Varich" and it was postmarked April 13, 1906.

I thought Tom Verde might like this information to know it's possible to find historically important postcards on Cornelia Crosby in flea markets, etc., where I find a lot of mine.

Russell S. Mascieri  
Moorestown, New Jersey

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### Hemingway's Hat

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A friend of mine just sent me a copy of the Summer 1989 issue of *The American Fly Fisher* with your article on Hemingway and the 1916 "Diary."

I want to congratulate you on a gracefully written article and a nicely edited early diary. Too much written on Hemingway is neither.

I've wondered about the Kennedy Library's dating of the photographs. The beautiful one on page 6—imagine a 70-year-old negative reproducing the leader! But then in those days it was probably gut. I've always assumed it was a post-war photo, largely on the evidence of the hat. That looks to be similar to one he brought back from the war in 1919 (one like those worn by either the Alpini Mountain Troops or the Arditi—commandos, nowadays.) Since he's wearing that hat on page 10, and the photos on both page 6 and 11 show the watch fob for his grandfather's watch, I've always assumed those pictures

(which I have copies of) were post-war and taken on the 1919 trip with Al and Jock (see Baker, p. 63).

But not to worry, you've written a very nice article and I trust it will be noted in the bibliography of *The Hemingway Review*.

To introduce myself, belatedly, I have been writing on Hemingway for a good many years and was the founding president of The Hemingway Society. In fact, my first publication on him tried, among other things, to show to non-fishermen how he used the craft of fly-fishing (even with hoppers) as an analogy to show both what Nick Adams was going through in his own mind and how, as a writer, he envisioned his "other" craft.

Needless to say, I fly-fish, as do many of my colleagues in The Hemingway Society (now Foundation). We've even been known to schedule our board meetings near good fishing spots.

Thanks for a good article.

Paul Smith  
South Glastonbury, Connecticut

*You've raised an interesting point. I too have often wished that we had accurate dates, locations, and sources for the remarkable angling photos in the Hemingway Collection at the John Fitzgerald Kennedy Library in Boston.*

*As a board member of the Hemingway Foundation of Oak Park, Illinois, a few years back, I had many opportunities to speak with Lewis Clarahan, Hemingway's companion on the "Hike to Walloon Lake" in 1916, about the photos which appear in Hemingway: A Trout Fisher's Apprenticeship. Lewis, who still resides in his native Oak Park, not far from Hemingway's two boyhood homes, confirmed (in 1986) that the photo (EH 746N, John Fitzgerald Kennedy Library) on page six in Volume 15, Number 1 of The American Fly Fisher was taken during the fishing hike of June 1916.*

*I don't know if you've had a chance to examine all the angling photos in the Hemingway Collection at the J.F.K., Paul, but it seems to me that the series of photographs taken by Hemingway and Clarahan in 1916 (many of which appear in Volume 15, Number 1 of The American Fly Fisher), are dated correctly, and, indeed, stand alone in the collection because of the consistency of the*



*size, shape, composition, and quality of each photo.*

*I also noticed that Hemingway wore (with but one variation, when he exchanged a white shirt for a dark pullover) the same outfit during the entire trip. The trousers he's wearing in the photo on page six are identical to those in the photos which appear on the front cover, inside front cover, and on page eleven. He's wearing the same watch fob, too, in all the photos. And, by the way, is that his pedometer hanging on the end of the fob? So, to my way of thinking, the photo on page six was taken in 1916.*

*I agree, "Too much written on Hemingway is neither." May we hear from you again?*

D.S.J.

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### Rebirth

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I enjoyed your piece on Hemingway in Michigan. It's incredible that we never tire of hearing about that man, or for that matter, never tire of reading his work. After reading about the fishing in Hemingway's era, my fishless days on the Rapid, Boardman or Black make me suspect I was born too late. But, luckily, we still have the U.P. I spent a day with John Voelker last summer, managed to catch eight-inches worth of brook trout (two four-inches) from Frenchman's Pond, and came away revitalized and optimistic.

Jerry Dennis  
Traverse City, Michigan

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### Inspiration

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Thank you for a very interesting issue on Ernest Hemingway. We are also pleased to learn of your plans to install a Hemingway exhibit at the Museum this summer.

Thinking of it recalled my Hippety-Hoppety (or Higgledy-Piggledy) rime, "Earnest Nobility," that I enclose for your amusement.

Hippety-hoppety  
Ernest M. Hemingway  
often would wish to be  
fishing the trout.  
Afterwards he could see  
most existentially  
ichthy-theology  
gave him his clout.

Robert W. Lewis, President  
The Hemingway Society  
Grand Forks, North Dakota

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Readers interested in finding out more about The Hemingway Society may contact Professor Robert W. Lewis, The Hemingway Society, Department of English, Box 8237, University of North Dakota, Grand Forks, ND 58202. The Society publishes The Hemingway Review and The Hemingway Newsletter.

## CONTRIBUTORS

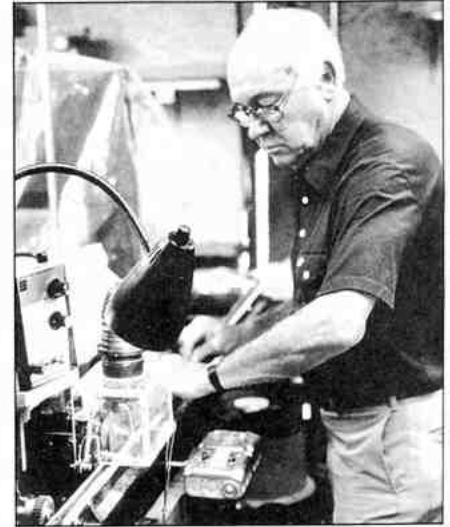
Arnold Yelin



**Jim Brown** is a professional librarian who lives and works in Stamford, Connecticut. A columnist for the quarterly magazine *Fishing Collectibles*, Jim is an avid fly fisherman and collector of antique fishing tackle; he previously published *Fishing Reel Patents of the United States, 1838-1940*, and has written numerous articles on the history of American fly reels, many of which have appeared in *The American Fly Fisher*.

Jim is a member of many angling and conservation groups, including Trout Unlimited, the Federation of Fly Fishers, Theodore Gordon Fly Fishers, Housatonic Fly Fishermen, the Catskill Fly Fishing Center, as well as AMFF. He most often fishes the Housatonic River in Connecticut, and says he's not yet "made the turn into salmon fishing." He and his wife Pat live with a blind cat named Trico.

Jurgen Preylowski



**Frank E. Raymond** was raised and educated in North Dakota. He moved to Chicago at the time of the Great Crash of 1929, where he was ultimately employed in the advertising department of the Quaker Oats Company. By 1953, he was in California working for an affiliate of CBS television as a copy writer and production manager.

Frank opted for an early retirement in 1971. He and his wife Bertha moved to the little town of Dunsmuir, hard by the Upper Sacramento River where the living was inexpensive and the fishing good. Frank's involvement in the Shasta County Historical Society in Redding, California, broadened his interest in the piscatorial history of northern California. He has written many articles for various outdoor and travel publications, and is the author of *Rivers To Remember: A Guide to Northern California's Great Outdoors* (Siskiyou Trail Press, Redding, CA, 1988).

Roy E. Haile



Marvin Stein



Margot Page



In addition to his duties as the Museum's volunteer coordinator, **Joe A. Pizarro** also provides valuable service as the Museum's reigning wit and philosopher-in-residence. A World War II veteran, Joe's professional career spanned three decades, during which time he worked as a radio scriptwriter, journalist, and public relations director.

His books include *The Gordon Gar-*

**James W. Schaaf** was born in the mining town of Creede, Colorado, in 1927. He later moved to Winslow, Arizona, Fort Worth, Texas, and Atlanta, Georgia, where he entered the U.S. Marine Corps in 1944. After active duty in the Asia and Pacific theatres and undergraduate work at Atlanta's Emory University, he completed his graduate work at the U.S. Public Health Center, at the University of Georgia, in 1951.

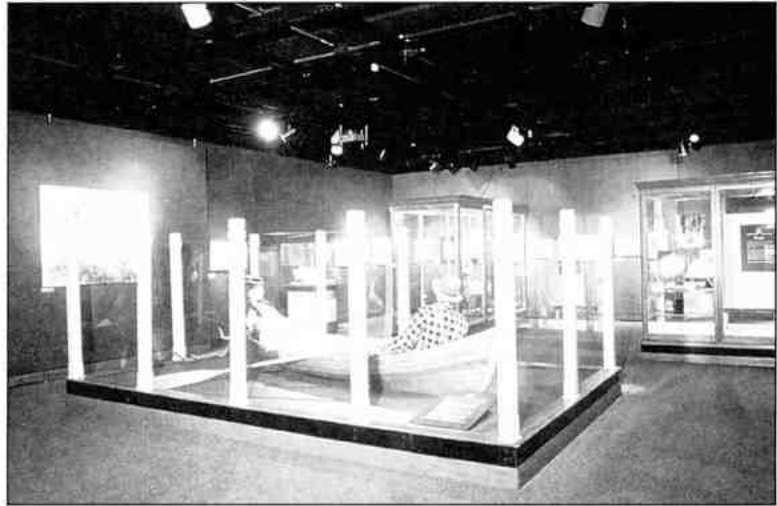
From 1951 until his retirement in 1985, Jim worked in California as a chemist for a number of nationally-known oil and petroleum companies. In 1980, he went public with the Jim Schaaf Rod Company, and by 1986 he had purchased the Dickerson and Bedford Anglers Rod Shop from the Tim Bedford Estate. Jim's other interests include photography, writing, military research, collecting antique tackle, and angling. He particularly cherishes the time he spends with his family, especially his grandson, Tyler.

**Gerald S. "Jerry" Stein, M.D.**, is a 46-year-old psychoanalyst in private practice in Colorado Springs, Colorado. He teaches, among other subjects, about creativity and the treatment of creative individuals as a member of the full faculty of the Denver Institute for Psychoanalysis and as an Assistant Clinical Professor of Psychiatry at the University of Colorado Health Sciences Center.

As a boy in Colorado, Gerry was introduced to fly fishing and bamboo rods by his grandfather, and he often fished the Gunnison River near James Schaaf's boyhood home, although they did not meet until 1986. A fishing guide while in medical school, Jerry now has a cabin on the Roaring Fork where his wife Carol long held the record for the largest trout caught.

land and *American Trout Fishing*. He is also a past president of The Theodore Gordon Fly Fishers, and a former editor of *Random Casts* and *The Flyfisher*. When not at the Museum, Joe can usually be found prospecting any number of rivers or brooks, or performing in the East Creek Playhouse in Rutland, Vermont. Joe now lives in East Wallingford, Vermont.

Rubi Vargha



AMFF's 1987-88 showing of "Anglers All" at the Philadelphia Academy of Natural Sciences.

## Inside the Museum



Quality educational programming is an important part of a museum's mission. In 1989, we hosted two major exhibitions of angling and sporting art. We also developed, or helped develop, nine large exhibits in seven states, including a showing of "Anglers All," our blockbuster traveling exhibit, at the Bell Museum of Natural History in Minneapolis. All well and good.

Still, we're feeling ambitious these days, and we'd like to see exhibits from the American Museum of Fly Fishing appear in as many museums as possible around the country. We've received numerous calls from members inquiring whether an AMFF exhibit could be brought to their community. The answer is yes.

It's a relatively simple process. One need only contact a local museum to see if there is any interest in hosting an AMFF exhibition. If so, call one of our staff members here at AMFF and we'll get the ball rolling.

Manchester, Vermont, may be a "far piece" for many of our members around the country, but we can, and will, bring the Museum to our members—no matter where they live.

D.S.J.

