

MAY, 1926

"Rocky Riffle on the Rogue River" by ZANE GREY

25 CENTS

Field & Stream

AMERICA'S MAGAZINE FOR THE OUTDOORSMAN

Field and Stream's
16th Annual Fishing Contest
*Conditions,
details and description of prizes*
In this issue

Holding lantern



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MAY, 1926

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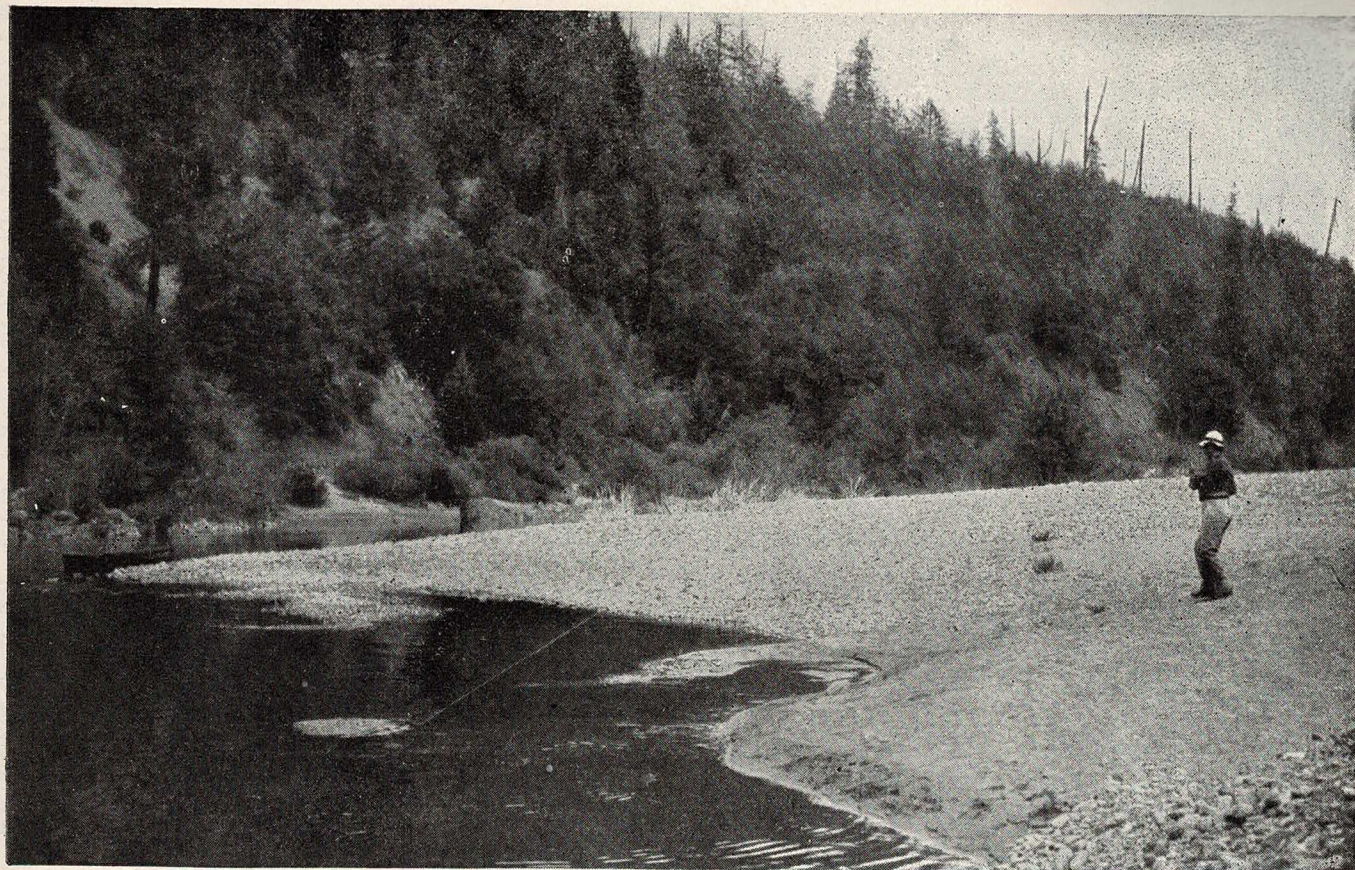
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When the fish was whipped, Burnham walked backward and carefully drew it out on the sand

ROCKY RIFFLE *on the* ROGUE RIVER

By

ZANE GREY

Fast water and faster steelhead

PART IV

SYNOPSIS

Zane Grey; his brother, R. C.; Ed and Ken, fishing chauffeurs, and George, the Japanese cook, an enthusiastic fisherman, are camped on the Rogue River for steelhead. Glowing reports of the wonderful fishing preceded them, but they failed miserably in their first efforts to take big trout with a fly. Friends, experts at the fly rod and steelhead game, take beautiful fish before their eyes. Great, wonderful steelheads in the 10-pound class, fish that would thrill the heart of any angler. And then one morning a crowd of native anglers with long bamboo poles invades Rocky Riffle and yanks fish after fish from its waters. R. C. finally breaks the jinx; but although fish rise to his fly, Zane Grey is unable to hook one. Faithfully he works early and late, with the knowledge that the fish are there and with the resolve that he will catch them.

NEXT morning I stole a march on the boys, and before they had finished breakfast I was on my way down to the river. Though the hour was early and the sun not yet silvering the fog-mantle over the eastern mountain range, the air was pleasant, almost balmy.

This Oregon climate was new to me. Oregonians have a slogan: "It is the climate," and I am bound to admit there is reason. Wherever else I had hunted and fished, the early hours of late October had been characterized by frost. Here was developing that enchanted time called Indian summer.

As I strode along I was aware of my hurry and that I did not attend to sights and sounds and smells as faithfully as was usually my wont. I saw a flock of gray birds, larger than doves, and concluded they were band-tailed pigeons. And once my eye caught a blue-gray flash of a deer in an opening of the woods across the river.

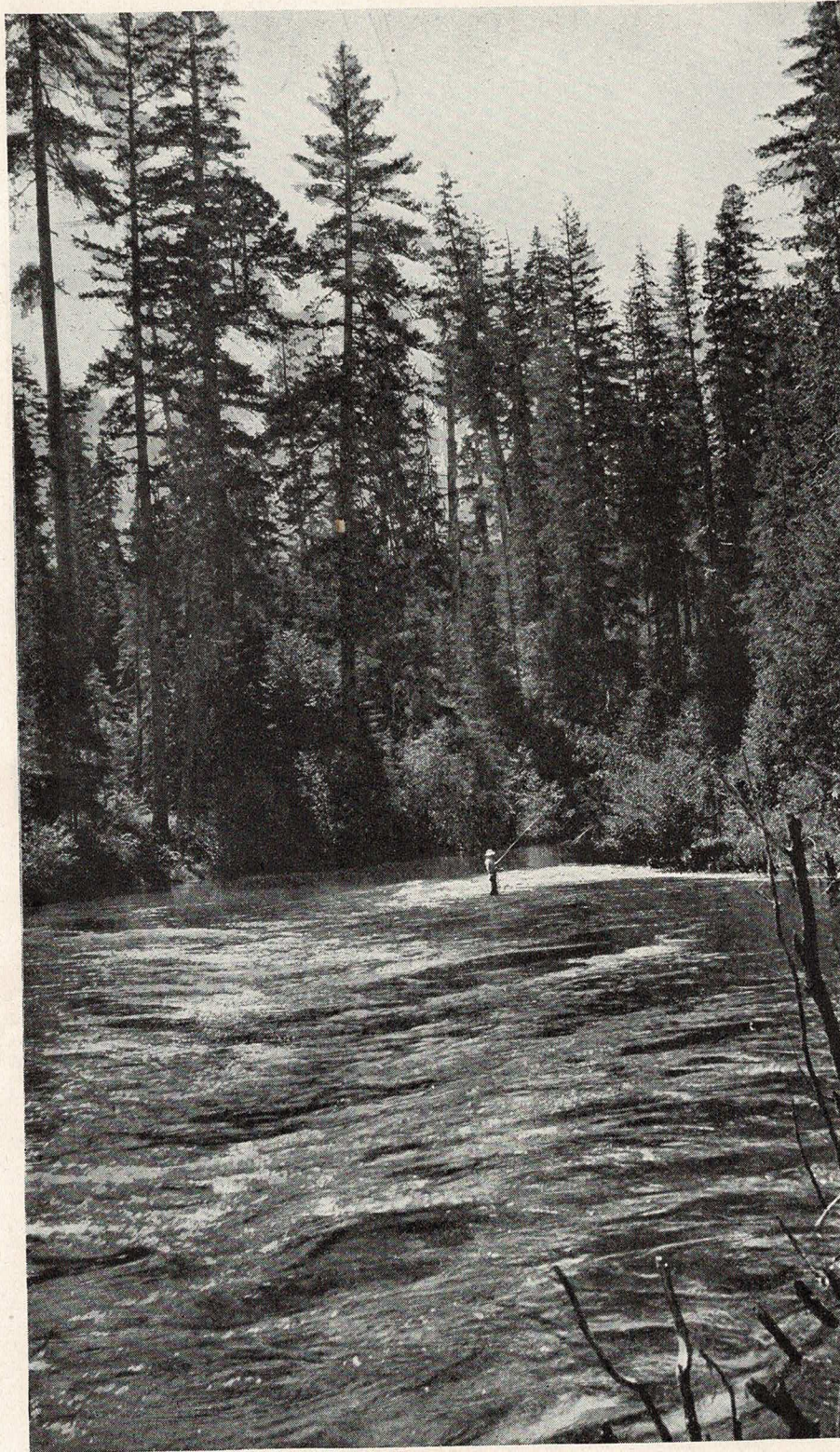
But for the most part I saw only the

river, searching for widening, rippling circles on smooth eddies, and the flip of a silver fish out of the riffles. Burnham had said the salmon and steelhead were showing very infrequently this season, a fact for which he could not account, unless it was because of the unusually low water.

It disappointed me keenly, for there is nothing I like more than to see any kind of game fish show on the surface. Still I had not wholly missed this pleasure of the watchful angler.

The early bird catches the worm—in fishing as in less charming walks of life. R. C. had cast a suspicious and knowing glance upon me. And Ken had yelled after me: "Keep away from my fishin' hole." Takahashi, who took profound interest in my fishing fortunes, also called out: "More better luck today mebbe!"

My chivalry in passing by R. C.'s place and Ken's hole was little to my credit, because I had quite a fight to attain it. Those respective lurking places for steelhead looked singularly alluring, and some-



Look at Ken up there. He's whipped that hole all morning

how I knew positively I could have gotten a strike out of both. But I went on, absorbed in thoughtfulness, and vaguely happy.

It afforded me considerable satisfaction to fish that half mile stretch of riffle, the best water on the river, before any other anglers hove in sight. I was turning back for my second lap when I espied the boys wading in above. A second faithful whipping of the same water did not earn me a strike. Upon my return to the head of the riffle, where it was deep and swift, I laid aside my fly rod and tried my bait rod with spinner for a while. No luck! Then I resorted to desperate ends in my

craving to break my ill fortune. I began to hunt in the shallow water for crawfish. The river was evidently full of them, many big red ones showing on the rocks. Small soft-shelled crawfish were not numerous and hard to find. This pursuit had an unlooked for pleasure—that of reminding me of catching crawfish and hellgrammites in boyhood days.

BUT alas! I was to find that I could not catch them as deftly as I used to. Finally I discovered several which might do, one of which especially appeared a most attractive bait for a steelhead.

Putting on a larger spoon, I fastened

this bait on the hook, and cast out over the swift water, and let it go with the current. Then I wound in and tried again. I could cast clear across the river to the identical spot where the native fishermen had raised their fish. And I had a feeling that I would get a strike. Meanwhile R. C. had come along, carrying a four-pound steelhead, and he leisurely sat down to watch me.

On my fourth cast I had a smashing strike. Despite my expectations I was startled. The fish took a short, vicious run. Then he split the water with a crack and tumbled aloft, an enormous steelhead. I heard him shake himself, and the spoon jingled high in the air. He had thrown it.

“WOW!” yelled R. C., leaping up. “Oh, he tore out! . . . Wasn’t that a lunker? By golly, I believe a spoon’s the thing to raise the biggest ones.”

“I had a crawfish on this spoon,” I told R. C., as I slowly wound in, manfully repressing my desire to swear to the high heavens.

Another crawfish, cast for a half hour over all that swift, deep place, failed to raise any more fish. Then R. C. tried it. While we were laboring thus, Ed had caught his first steelhead, which he brought proudly to exhibit.

“Bingo, he grabbed my fly!” exclaimed Ed, with eyes alight. “Not very big, but he was the fightin’est cuss I ever hooked. I’ve sure fallen for this steelhead stuff. An’ say, look at Ken up there. He’s whipped that hole all mornin’. Worse’n me!”

At this juncture Burnham and Wiborn appeared below, making their way down the boulder-strewn slope toward the river. R. C. and I went to meet them. They had been two miles below, at another good riffle, where they had caught several steelhead, all small.

“Anything doing on Rocky Riffle today?” inquired Burnham. And upon being informed that we thought it was no good he laughed and said he would show us how to catch one.

Burnham was a stalwart figure, looking like a guard on a Yale football team. He was over six feet tall and would weigh around two hundred. He wore wading boots with very heavy soles thickly studded with nails. When he ploughed into the water, R. C. remarked that it was not any wonder he could wade the Rogue. Some of us would have drowned where Burnham comfortably lighted cigarettes. His weight and height, of course, helped him to be such a wonderful wader; and wading was half the secret of Rogue River fishing.

Burnham’s casting was a thing of beauty. Two sharp motions of his wrist! It seemed so easy. He used a short, rather stiff 5½-ounce rod. On his forward cast the line shot out gracefully in high rolling waves. The last half circle of the line would straighten out, sweeping the long leader ahead and letting the fly light first. Like a feather it dropped. Burnham allowed it to float until it reached its limit below him; then he cast again. He could place his fly in all the dark holes and channels, behind the submerged rocks, along the sunken ledges.

If it was fascinating to watch him how much more so would it have been to be able to fish that way! He covered the whole stretch of water before us, however, without raising a fish. R. C. and I followed along, learning more from watching him work than we could out of any amount of practice.

At the bottom of this riffle the river broke, the main body of water going

Rocky Riffle on the Rogue River

through a swift channel near the left shore, and on the right a wide space of shallow water glided over flat, corrugated rock, hurrying faster and faster, at last to rush in rippling channels down into what appeared a wonderful, deep, dark pool.

"That's my favorite place on this river," said Burnham, pointing across. "I can always get a rise there."

He waded the deep, swift channel, which had appeared more formidable than it really was. It was too far for me to see clearly the kind of water, but it looked as if on his very first cast he hooked one right at his feet. The steelhead began to run and jump, and got out in the pool, and finally reached the heavy current.

Then Burnham had to move out of there. Holding his rod up high, he piled off the ledge into deep, swift water, and I was sure, if the current had not been behind him, he would have lost his balance. He went downstream while he crossed, and eventually reached the gravel bar and was able to recover line. It amazed me to see how hard he pulled on that steelhead. Still he took what seemed a long time.

When the fish was whipped, Burnham walked backward up the bar and carefully drew it out on the sand. It was a beautiful specimen, a male fish he said, weighing close to seven pounds.

"I'm going to take you over there," he announced.

AND forthwith he dragged me into the river, and held on to me while he waded. In the middle of that channel the water reached up to my waist. I could see the bottom plainly, and made a mental picture of the course. I noted he waded diagonally downstream. The hardest part was getting out on the flat ledge. The action of current had worn the rock into ruts, sharp, curved and as slippery as ice. Once beyond that zone, the wading was comparatively easy.

Burnham halted me within fifty feet of the most beautiful place to fish that I had ever seen in my life. It beggared description. I devoured it with my eyes.

We stood up to our knees in fairly swift water. In front, it poured off a slanting yellow ledge into a riffle that smoothed out in a deep, dark pool. To the right, a

glancing incline of water came gliding from under the high, wooded bank and swept with low roar into the pool. Between riffle and channel some golden rocks just showed under the surface. Green and amber depths, white water and eddying

and Rogue River steelhead in particular.

There is only one thing wrong with a fishing day—its staggering brevity. If a man spent all his days fishing, life would seem to be a swift dream.

We arrived at length at the subject of angling books. Marvelous to realize, I actually have more fishing books than fishing rods. I was asked why I so obviously thought the English fishing books superior to the American.

"I SUPPOSE because the English anglers write better," was my reply. "Then they have infinitely more background and tradition. If they had such a river as this Rogue, such wonderful fish as steelhead, what wouldn't they write!"

"Izaak Walton is, of course, your favorite?" was another query.

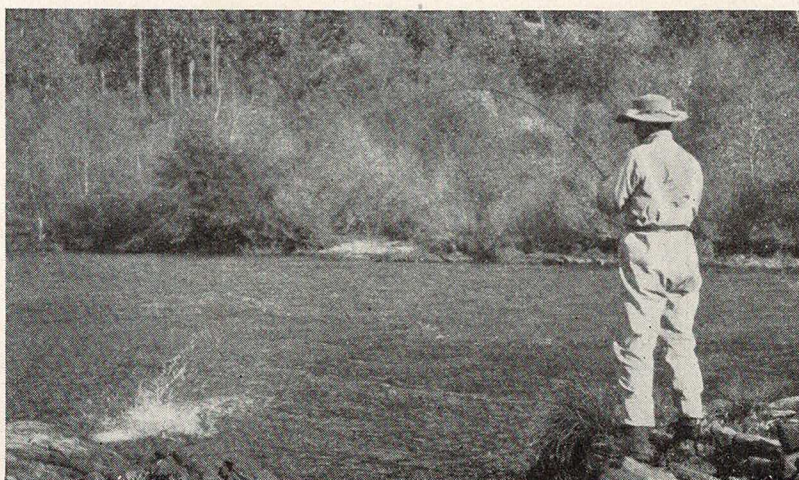
"My choice of all fishing books is *Fishing from the Earliest Times*, by William Radcliffe, an English author and Oxford man. This is so great a book that I have never felt equal to writing the review of it I promised for American publication. The best of angling authors fill their books with the beauty, the thrill, the recreation, the peace and joy of fishing. And the myriad of ordinary writers on fishing are well worth reading because they deal with actual experience. They tell simply of adventure on the water.

"It remained for William Radcliffe to spend twenty years of his life translating Greek, Roman, Hebrew, Chinese, all the ancient languages where there was any word of fishing. And he traveled as industriously as he read. All to get at the antiquity, the source of fishing!"

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"My father used to punish me for running off to fish when I should have mowed the lawn or swept out his office. He declared the only good fishermen who had ever lived were Christ's four fishermen disciples. My father was sure I would come to some bad end because I loved to fish. But he was wrong.

"And all fathers of youthful Izaak
(Continued on page 101)



On my fourth cast I had a smashing strike

foam, shelving ruts reaching under the ledge, and beyond them the black pool whirling round, mirroring the great mountain slope—these certainly called to all that was thrilling for a fisherman.

Burnham showed me where to cast. It was not beyond my reach, and my fly alighted very creditably for me, floated down, disappeared. I felt a slow draw, that I fancied was the current.

"Hook him!" shouted Burnham.

But I was a fraction of a second too late. I just felt the fish as he ejected the fly.

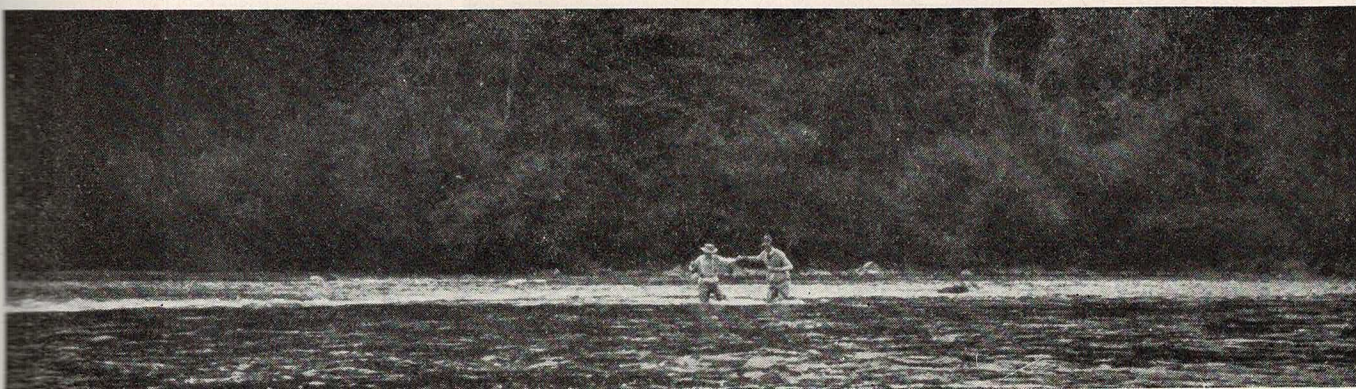
"Didn't you see that fish rise?" queried Burnham. "He was a big, lazy duffer. He just sucked the fly in. Sometimes steelhead will do that. Then if you don't see them, you're out of luck. Try again. There's a bunch of fish at the foot of that current."

The moment was a little too exciting for me to maintain perfect calm. I cast well enough, but I was certainly shaky. On my third cast I had the sharpest kind of a strike, quick as lightning. The steelhead was gone before I knew what had happened.

"Always raise your tip after casting, and hold your line tight in your left hand," advised Burnham.

Further casting on my part failed to raise another steelhead. Then Burnham tried his hand without success. Whereupon we waded back to the other shore, and found comfortable seats where we rested and discoursed about fish in general

Burnham halted me within fifty feet of the most beautiful place to fish that I had ever seen in my life



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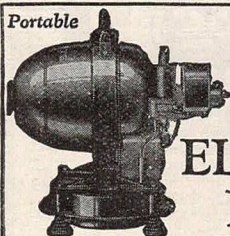


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diseases of fishes and their control; investigation of the effects of water-power development on the fisheries of large rivers; the study of the productivity of the Upper Mississippi River and of small ponds in fish and fish food; the ascertainment of the value of protective legislation on the rehabilitation of the mussel fauna of lakes and rivers; the study of the relation of aquatic plants and insects to pond culture of fishes. These and many other important studies have received in the past few years the attention of the personnel of the Fairport Laboratory.

The Fairport Laboratory as an aquicultural experiment station, then, purposes to serve the public in a manner similar to that by which the agricultural experiment station serves the individual farmer. It must be remembered that the lakes and streams of the nation are usually public and not private property, and wholesale conservation methods to preserve or increase the useful wild life of these intra- and interstate waters must be carried out with a view of service to all the people and not a given few.

The Fairport Station fulfills its mission in an experimental and a practical way. Its primary attention is focused on the ascertainment of the conditions of preservation and increase of the desirable animals and plants of interior waters to offset continued depletion of these aquatic resources and to bring them to maximum fruitfulness.

Maximum fruitfulness, however, does not mean in this case fruitfulness viewed only from the commercial fish and mussel aspect. There are other relationships to be considered if our inland waters are to be maximally efficient. Recreation, health, power development, agriculture, navigation, sewage disposal and drainage must not be lost sight of.

ROCKY RIFFLE ON THE ROGUE RIVER

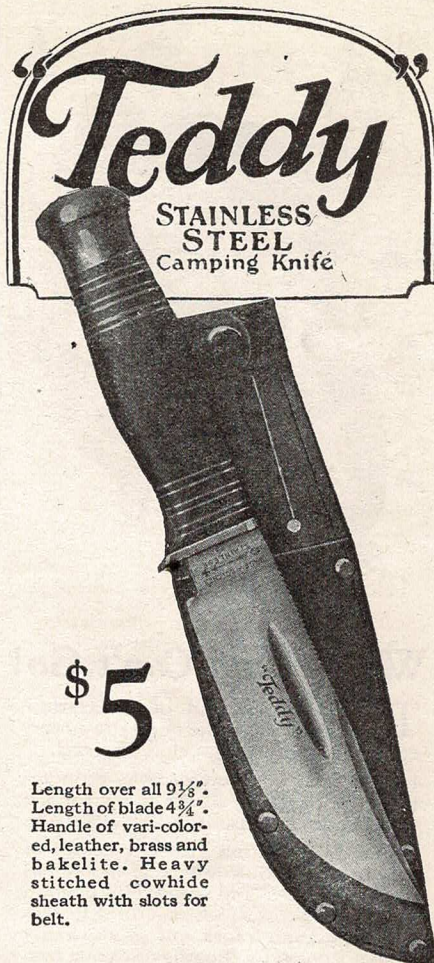
(Continued from page 27)

Waltons or angling Rip Van Winkles should read this wonderful book and learn how fortunate they are in having such inspired sons. For fishing has a dignity, a simplicity, a ruggedness and honesty little dreamed of in this materialistic world. Its history is profoundly revealing and tremendously interesting to the angler, whether he be naturalist or not. But every fisherman, unconsciously or otherwise, is something of a naturalist.

"Why men love to fish is much more easily understood than how they came to learn it. For all fishing skill and implements are but evolutions of the past. Where did fishing originate? Who were the first men to practice it? What kind of tackle did they use? How far back into the dim and mystic past can fishing be traced?

"It seems to me that every earnest student of angling should read Radcliffe's incomparable book. Even the humble market-fisherman or the loafer-fisherman could not help but be enthralled. For the facts about a man's calling, his toil, or his unbreakable habits are bound to be interesting. When rightly presented, they take hold of his bosom.

"I have tried this out in many ways, on boatmen, on fishermen by trade, on the worthless idlers who live only to hunt and fish. I never found it hard to get their attention. I would tell them that one of the first fish-hooks used by prehistoric man came from the hind leg of an insect that had a long, stout, recurved spur. Or about how early Aristotle claimed that



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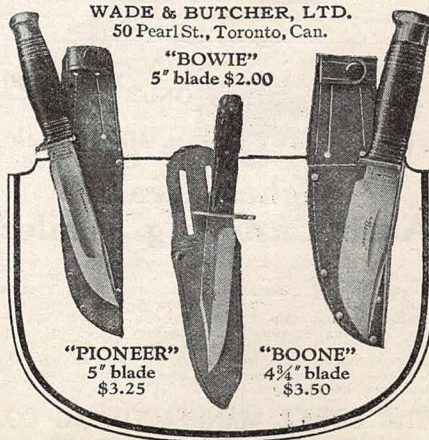
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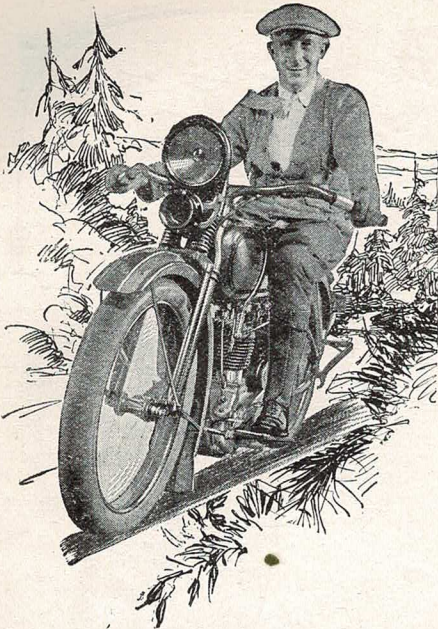
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fishes really did hear. Or why the dolphin and tuna were mentioned by so many ancient writers. Or about how fish in early Roman days became luxuries for which fabulous sums of money were paid. Or about the earliest drawing or representation of fishing in 2000 B.C. Or that early fishing lines were sometimes made from the hair of dead human beings. Or the mention of fishes in the Bible, and in the various interpretations of the deluge. Or any other of the innumerable quotations, anecdotes and scientific deductions with which this book is packed.

"Best of all, *Fishing from the Earliest Times* gave me infinite respect for this form of outdoor life which means most to me. The joy of fishing, the thrill of it, the fascination and the wholesome, strength-renewing virtues that attend its practice were things I never needed to learn from a book. Then quite by myself I felt that I had discovered some secret mind-saving, soul-healing property concealed in this gentle art.

"But it remained for *Fishing from the Earliest Times* to invest my favorite outdoor pursuit with the dignity of education, of culture, of an affinity with great minds of the past, with an important place in the history and progress of the world."

(To be continued)

FLY FISHING HINTS

(Continued from page 33)

If you find a fly which generally takes fish in the water where you fish, try different sizes of the fly when one size is not taken. As a general rule, trout of the Northern waters, the Maine lakes and rivers, the lakes of Canada, the Nipigon river and other large trout waters of the north shore of Lake Superior, take large flies and flies of rather pronounced hues, like the Parmacheene Belle, the Grizzly King, Silver Doctor and white-tipped Montreal; sizes generally from No. 4 to No. 8.

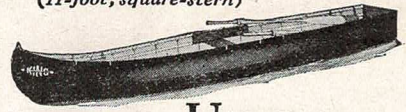
Trout of inland mountain streams of the Middle West and East generally take such flies as Coachman, Queen of Water, Cowdung and various neutral colored flies. For dry for these streams, try Cahill, Female Beaverkill, Wickham's Fancy and Governor, with other flies of modest garment; sizes for varying conditions No. 8 to No. 12, for very low water sometimes No. 14. In the late season, either dry or wet, the Soldier Palmer is a good general fly for the waters last mentioned, also in large sizes for the first waters mentioned.

MANY English anglers do not scorn night fly-fishing for trout. The same is true of some American anglers, where state laws do not prevent. And it is a fact that the whales of brown, rainbow and brook trout of many streams generally feed at night. Then it is also true that the curse of brown trout waters, the large cannibal brown, seldom takes an artificial fly except at night, and the stream is the better for his killing. So the pronounced ethical among our craft will excuse me if I say a word about night fishing.

At night, trout do not take a fly in the way they take it in the daytime. And large flies should be used. For many trout waters a No. 6 Royal Coachman or a No. 6 Parmacheene Belle is an excellent night fly. When night fishing, use a wet fly and let it sink a little. Retrieve it with a series of gentle jerks. At the veriest intimation of a fish, and by feeling only, hit him and hit him hard. This means a stout leader

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