The Salmon Flyer 1988 – 1999

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The Salmon Flyer

Volume 1 – 1988 to Volume 11 - 1999

SNOWIES #2 FOR LOCH NESS
Dressed by Flemming Dam Nielsen

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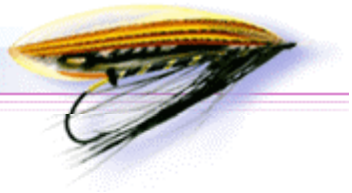

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Vol. 1 - No.1, Winter, 1988

LIKE TO DYE IMITATIONS - HERE'S A GOOD ONE

If you are interested the dyeing of the pheasant feathers goes as follows:

> The feather is washed, then dyed in a mixture of 7 parts golden yellow Rit (#42), 1 part Cocoa Brown Rit (#20), 1 part tan Rit (#16). After drying the non-web portion of the feather is marked with an orange SUPRA Hi-Liter. The tip half of the fibers are then marked with an orange HI IMPACT (Sanford's) marker. The fiber tips are marked with a "Super Hot Red" Pantone marker; the extreme tip ends just touched with a brown "Sharpie" marker. As a final touch, the fiber from the web to the red marked area is covered by a "Skilcraft" yellow hi-lighter. The ink carrier for this pen partially dissolves the other ink, adding a two-tone thin orange band just above the red.

When this feather is wet and the tip curved by an eyelash tool, or similar appliance, some of the ink may appear to come off on the rubber anvil. This is some of the ink dissolved by the yellow hi-lighter and does not hurt the appearance of the final feather. If too much yellow is used the other inks will not set properly and may have to be remarked. Safest way to handle the dyed feather is to let the ink dry before handling; and not to use excessive moisture prior to setting the tip curve.

> To dye the small (or larger) golden pheasant crest feathers use a bath of 112 Carmel (#47), 1/2 Rust (#17) Rit.

"NEW" GUT EYES

As newcomer to the Salmon Fly game, I have had considerable difficulty in locating "old" or "real" gut and then trying to figure out how to use it. While I continue to search for "authentic" gut, I am using surgical gut given to me by fly fishing doctor and surgeon friends. They seem to have lots of samples and throwaways. Just ask for sizes "2", "1", "0" and "00", preferably without the needles attached. These sizes are well suited for a wide range of hook sizes and make a pretty good-looking eye loop. Surgical gut sure beats monofilament as a substitute for the old stuff. By the way, don't worry about the surgical gut being sealed in alcohol or dried out. I let it dry before I start to use it.

TWISTING THE GUT

Step 1: Get two ten inch saucepans. Pour some water in one saucepan and bring it to a boil. Place several ice cubes in the other saucepan and cover the cubes with cold water. Make sure the water gets icy cold. Have both pans close to one another. Step 2: Cut three 6 inch strands of "0" surgical gut and bundle them together with the ends even. Clamp a hemostat in each end, making sure the three strands are straight and bundled tightly together. (The diameter mentioned above is for hook sizes 5/0 and larger. For smaller hooks you should choose a smaller diameter.) The six inch length is enough to make two eyes.

Step 3: Now twist the gut strands together with the aid of the hemostats until they attain a tight rope-like appearance. Continue to hold the twisted strands straight and tight between the hemostats. Submerge them in the boiling water for about ten seconds. Then quickly take them out and dip them in the ice water for thirty seconds or longer. Continue to hold them straight during the entire process.

Step 4: Remove the strands from the ice water with hemostats still attached and drape them over a chair, or whatever, to dry. The dangling hemostats will provide a sufficient pressure to prevent any unraveling until the twisted gut is dry.

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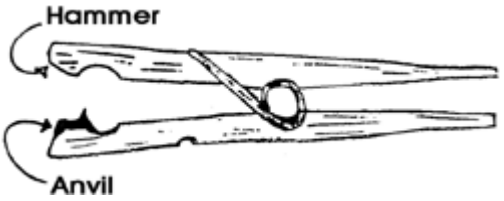
Vol. 1 - No.2, Spring, 1989

INDIAN CROW CRIMPER

by Marvin Nolte

This little tool can nut just the right finishing touch on your Indian Crow subs by crimping the tips of whatever feather you use. The anvil is a small piece of closed cell foam glued to one jaw of the clothespin. The hammer has been shaped with small files. Some trial and error is involved here.

I crimp as many as three feathers at a time by: stacking them one atop the other, aligning their tips, moistening them, and clamping. After about ten minutes you can remove the feathers and let them finish drying outside the crimper.



SUBSTITUTE MATERIALS

by JOHN PIKE

Note: In the first issue my article on dyeing and substitute materials wasn't the complete explanation I had hoped to present. Perhaps this will make my ideas clearer. I do believe that a substitute should be as close a representation of the natural material as is possible to create. But in dealing with small feathers you reach a point where fussing over small details ceases to be a practical matter. Though the following instructions may appear overly complicated, the marking of the Ruffed Fruit Crow feather should take no longer than a minute, the marking of the Florican (entire feather) less than five minutes.

RED RUFFED FRUIT CROW

The substitute for this feather is found on the white-band feathers from a ringnecked pheasant. Of course the feathers must be dyed the base dirty yellow color of the natural. I use two separate dye formulas of RIT dye to achieve this color. For those that have not seen a Fruit Crow feather the color is difficult to describe. The base of the feather is dark gray to black, the body of the feather is dirty-yellow grading into iridescent yellow, orange and red at the extreme tip. The very end of the feather often has a very fine dark brown bend on the ends of the fibers. The feather is also humped, or knuckled, at the beginning of the yellow color; the over-all outline of the feather has a blunt tip, not pointed as with a chicken hackle. A representation of the color of the hackle can be found in the BORGER COLOR SYSTEM (BCS), or in Pantone pens. Body of the feather is BCS 53 (Pantone pen 130), tip is BCS 85 (Pantone pen Super Warm Red).

The first dye formula gives the best color, but it is more difficult to adjust than the second.

Formula #1: RIT #1 yellow (3 parts), #16 tan (1 part), #23 gold (2parts), #40 tangerine (1 part).

Formula #2: RIT #1 yellow (3 parts), #17 rust (1 1/2 parts).

Be sure to add acetic acid (or vinegar) to set the colors. Time in the dye varies with temperature. At 120 F, about four minutes. If the color is too dark, place the feathers in weak color remover until they fade, wash, then try again.

After drying, the tip portion of the feather is marked with an fluorescent orange SUPRA Hi-Liter. The fiber tips (1/8") are marked with a "Red" SHARPIE marker pen, the extreme tip ends just touched with a brown "Sharpie" marker. The feather is then marked from the base to the tip with a "Skilcraft" yellow hi-lighter. The ink carrier for this pen partially dissolves the other inks, adding a two-tone thin orange bend just above the red. Be sure to clean the tip of the yellow marker after each pass over the red ink. (An

alternate red pen to use is a TOMBO ABt #845ro. This color is a orange red, very bright. But the ink is water based and may need to be remarked after the feather is curved.)

To finish creating the appearance of the natural the dyed feather is moistened and the tip curved by an eyelash curler, or similar appliance. Some of the ink may appear to come off on the rubber anvil. This is some of the ink dissolved by the yellow hi-lighter and does not hurt the appearance of the final feather. If too much yellow is used the other inks will not set properly and may have to be remarked. Safest way to handle the dyed feather is to let the ink dry before handling; and not to use excessive moisture prior to setting the tip curve.

To get the most accurate curve on the feather using an eyelash-curling tool, place the damp feather on the rubber anvil with the best side of the feather towards the rubber. Close the jaws on the tip just past the red marked band. Hold the jaws of the tool closed with a rubber band. Attach a pair of hackle pliers to the stem of the feather, and allow their weight to pull the feather over and down the backside of the rubber anvil. Set aside and allow to dry.

When dry, remove the feather from the tool. Snap the feather with your finger to separate the fibers. At this point the feather should have the most bizarre stair-step bend on the end that you would ever expect too see. **If you plan on remarking any of the tip color, do it now!** Gently place the feather over a steamer so the steam briefly touches the feather underside. Instantly the feather will start to flatten. One or two brief passes over the steam and you should have just the right curves in the feather. Too much steam wi11 completely straighten the feather, and you'll have to go through the bending procedure again. If the tip of the feather needs more red, gently mark the ends of the fibers but do not touch the bend with wet ink.

NOTES:

I have not found a better feather to use for this process than the white ringneck pheasant feather. Used for cheek veiling, small feathers of this type are adequate if they are coated with a marker pen, such as the Skilcraft. The pen ink mats the fine feather barbules, giving the final product the needed lacy appearance.

As for the overall appearance of the feather tip, the choice is up to you. Each subspecies of Pyroderus scutatus has a slightly different feather coloring. The marking I use is for P.s. occidentalis. This coloration is more suhdued than that of other subspecies, which works well with the process I use. Whatever coloration you decide on keep in mind the following points:

1. Heat (acids or alkali) used during the original curing, or cleaning of the skin may have altered the color of the feather you are using for a model.

2. The irridescence of the natural feather is formed in the structure of the feather barb; those barbs lack barbules. If you dye a substitute feather with an iridescent dye, most of the shine is on the barbules. Mat the feather to achieve a lacy appearance (as is wetting to set the curve) and most, if not all, the effect of the irridescence is lost. For that reason, you might as well use a marking pen to color the feather.

3. Blending the tip coloration is important. That is why I used the yellow marker to carry the orange and red colors to the tip. The yellow also blends with the red to brighten that color. I did discover that using water-based pens is not something you wish to do. The carrier for the ink in those pens causes the dye to bleed back towards the stem of the feather along the barbs. You do not get a clean, smooth banded appearance; and there is no way to correct the bleeding once it begins. 4. The coloring process I use will leave excess dye on the feather. This dye will cane off when the feather is dampened. This will not hurt the appearance of the final product, with the exception that the red tip color may need to be enhanced. Remember, the amount of dye moved is directly proportional to the amount of moisture placed an the feather prior to its being reshaped. If you get carried away with wetting the feather, you could acquire a colored tongue.

I also suggest that you not use PANTONE markers. The carrying agent in those pens also bleeds into the feather fibers. If you choose to use another marker you might consider DESIGN. I, along with John Betts, believe it is superior in every way to PANTONE.

BARON TAPE

About 6 months ago Wayne Luallen was giving a class on tying Atlantic Salmon flies near his home in Visalia Calif. A group of us met with him to participate and I decided it would be a good idea to video tape the session as we went along. The idea was good but trying to pay attention to the class, taking notes, observing the minute details and video taping at the same time turned out to be a major failure. At the end of the class we had three videotapes recorded, basically 6 hours of garbage. Nonetheless we had learned from this experience that a recording session would have to be just that a recording session and nothing else. Wayne and I talked over the phone a few times and we both agreed that it would be beneficial to attempt to videotape the tying of an Atlantic Salmon pattern so that others might benefit from such an instructional tape. As well we would benefit from comments and ideas that we expect to receive in response, pertaining to new or different techniques in both filming and tying. We all have so much to learn whether expert or novice.

A short time after our phone call I made a trip to Wayne's home where Wayne, myself, Larry Goates, and Darwin Atkin all got together to share ideas and discuss how we were going to put this thing together. We played with camera, lighting, backgrounds etc... Months went by until this last weekend when we all got together again to actually do the recording session.

We all agreed that the pattern known as the Baron would be a good fly to tie because it incorporates many of the techniques necessary in tying many of the Atlantic Salmon patterns. Donna, Wayne's wife help put together some drawings that we would be using to demonstrate some of the more critical points in the tying process, where we felt it would be difficult to capture on the film. She did an excellent job and deserves a lot of credit.

The film is now finished, we kept the time down to less than two hours (i.e., one tape) as we had set out to do. At this time I would like to mention that this by no way is a professional product, we have done the best we could under the circumstances, although we are fairly happy with the end results. The film is available to anyone who wishes to purchase it at the cost of a tape, the reproduction. and shipping (approximately $20.00 plus postage). To order a copy, send your request to Wayne Luallen.

Please keep in mind that no profit is to be made on this film! We are selling it at our cost, feel free to make copies of the film for your friends as long as you do so at your cost too. We hope that you enjoy the film and learn some new techniques from it. Hopefully this film will inspire some of you out there to do the same, it is a lot of work but we had a lot of fun doing it as well. Please send your comments to us so we may learn too. Wayne has presented his present methods for tying this particular fly at this time. He would like you to understand that there is no absolute correct method for tying a fly. If you know some techniques that are better than those presented continue to use them, but PLEASE SHARE THEM WITH US TOO.

BLEACHING

by Marvin Nolte

Formula 1: 4 oz Clairol Ultra Blue

2 oz Lady Clairol Instant Whip

2/3 oz Lady Clairol Lightening Booster

Formula 2: 4 oz Claioxide (20% Hydrogen Peroxide)

1/3 oz Lady Clairol Lightening Booster

(NOTE: REDKEN makes products superior to Clairol, but they are not available. in all locations. Check with your local beauty supply house.)

CAUTION

These bleaching agents are powerful oxidizers!

- Wear rubber or plastic gloves.

- Use plastic or glass containers.

- Do not seal the container if you are soaking material in the bleach for long periods of time, there, is a real possibility the container may explode. The mixtures themselves are not flammable, but are toxic. Formula 1 produces some obnoxious vapors, use it in a well ventilated area.

BLEACHING STEPS:

1. Use small sections of material. A piece of fur or hair six inches square is about as large as can he successfully bleached. A full cape or saddle poses no problem.

2. Wash items to be bleached thoroughly in warm soapy water, then rinse until all trace of soap is removed. Any soap will work but shampoo works best.

3. Work the bleach into the item taking care to insure that the bleach reaches all the fibers and all the way to the "roots".

4. When the desired color has been achieved stop the bleaching action by washing the item in warm soapy water and rinsing.

5. To restore natural softness to the material you may wish to soak what you have bleached in a bath of Woollite overnight, then rinse it thoroughly in clear water.

BLEACHING FEATHERS:

1. Use Formula 1. Formula 2 is too slow acting. The long immersion times required may damage the feathers.

2. The process takes between 15 minutes and 2 hours depending upon the shade desired.

BLEACHING FUR:

1. Formula 1 or 2 may be used. Each produces a different effect.

2. Formula 1 takes between 15 minutes and 2 hours, Formula 2 between 1 hour and 24 hours, to reach the desired shade.

BLEACHING HAIR:

1. Any hair may be used (Mule Deer, Whitetail, Antelope, Elk, etc.) but because it is a darker gray that Whitetail, Mule Deer gives more shades of brown.

2. Formula 1 is used for hair but is modified slightly. Because hair is longer and denser than fur it is difficult to get the tips and "roots" to bleach properly. This problem is compounded by the properties of Formula 1. It is thick and fast acting. Add to Formula 1 an equal volume of water (6 oz), mix well and apply as usual.

3. Diluted Formula 1 will reach the desired shade in 1 to 3 hours.

PREPARING AND DYEING SEAL FUR

by Alec Jackson

In order to obtain brilliant colors with superb translucence and luster you must dye your own seal fur. Bleached seal fur (from commercial sources) is a dull, dirty brown color and is full of sawdust, both which must be removed prior to dying if dull lifeless colors are to be avoided. It takes a lot of time and work to do this, but the results justify the effort.

One approach to preparing seal fur for dying involves the following six steps:

1. Removal of Most of the Sawdust. Shake the seal in a plastic bag to separate the fine sawdust from the fur. Pull the fur apart to allow most of the coarse sawdust to fall out.

2. Degreasing. Add a small quantity of water containing Veniard's Degreaser to the fur so as to form a wet mass - not a slurry. Knead the wet mass every several hours for two days. Rinse several times with

warm water and air dry at roan temperature. Remove additional sawdust by repeatedly pulling the fur through your fingers.

3. Washing. Repeat step 2, but replace the De Greaser with Veniards Venpol.

4. Repeat Step 2.

5. Repeat Step 3.

6. Bleaching. Using a wet mass of fur, bleach with MAXI-BLAND or ULTRABLUE hair bleach. Knead every several hours for two days, rinse several times with warm water and air dry. Remove as much of the remaining sawdust as is possible prior to storing or dying. Follow the dye manufacturer's instructions when dying. Veniards dyes generally do a good job, but some exceptions must be noted. For claret use Veniards Dark Claret and not their Light Claret. For black use Natural Black or Jet Black hair dye. For purple use Gentian Violet (from your Doctor), or, if you can find it, Analine Dye. After dying seal fur any color treat it with a good hair conditioner.

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HOLLYWOOD --- ALMOST

Most of you are aware of the featherwing Baron that Scott Stisser, Larry Goates and I videotaped in March. Many of you have that tape, and some have sent back to us constructive comments for which we are grateful. Some have also asked that we write down what we did so that they might learn from our approach. Our hope then and now is that others will do similar tapes so that we might learn their approach to different salmon flies.

First of all, take your time putting it together. We met once several months before and played with the camera, lighting and background. When we did the actual filming, we had only one day to do it. We started at 8:30 a.m. and finished at 70:30 p.m. with only a couple of meal breaks. Two days would have been better. Also, doing a preliminary fly and practicing with our team together would have helped. A written script may not help, but having an established plan would. Know what you want to show and what you want to leave out. We chose to keep it under two hours, and with that time limit it was impossible to show everything.

Our team size of one tier, one cameraman and one gopher (Larry wants you to know he was the gopher) was very good. We found it beneficial that all team members understood salmon fly tying concepts. (One more cameraman would be useful if a second camera was used.) The gophers is the busy person making sure all materials are prepared in advance and in order. Also, that person must keep the tying area clean of unnecessary items that would cause a poor background to film against, as well as simply being handy for whatever.

Ours biggest problem was the limitation of the camera. It was an excellent Panasonic with a macro Feature. The problem was that in macro it required being 1 1/2-2" from the fly; therefore, it was impossible to tie with, so we had to use several drawings. (We would have used drawings anyway, but possibly not so many had the macro worked from a greater distance.) I wanted to film the fly from the tier's view point. In order to get the correct angle to the camera (which was to my right and slightly above my shoulder) I had to rotate and tilt the fly, an awkward position to tie from but not insurmountable. A large, steady tripod was of tremendous help. A consideration might be to have two cameras with an editing feature, showing different angles. Also, a fade feature would have smoothed out transitions between steps.

For lighting, we chose photo floods of warm color and two fluorescent lamps to tie under, one being daylight and the others a pinkish tone. We tried one flood, two floods, bouncing floods, etc., but our best seemed to come from one flood slightly from the camera's night and slightly behind. Have plenty of photoflood bulbs, since life expectancy is only about two hours, and turn them off when not taping. Our chosen background came through trial and error. What looked good to our eyes was not what the camera necessarily preferred. We finally went to white butcher paper on the table and as a rolled

backdrop. The only exception to that was when we wanted to show detail in a crest feather, and for that we found a blue velvet-like material to be the best.

There are numerous other small suggestions, such as have a materials list and a completed fly to show at the beginning. Also, have a color TV on hand to review steps when they are completed. Cue cards were a joke for us, so next time I'd memorize what I felt was mandatory to say. Get the best camera(s) you can find. A good source might be your local college communications department and a student looking for an unusual project. If you do it at home, get rid of the kids, cat and dog and remove the phone from the hook. Last but not least, relax and have fun. Don't get me wrong; it was work but gratifying work.

If you have a specific question I have not addressed of a comment that wasn't covered here, please white to us.

NOTES FROM WAYNE LUALLEN

1) When tying in herl butts, many prefer small flued ostrich herl, which can be difficult to find. But when found, to keep the butt as small as possible, tie in by the tip and wrap carefully by hand, not with hackle pliers. The herl will be less likely to break, you'll have control and the end result will be tighter and smaller in diameter.

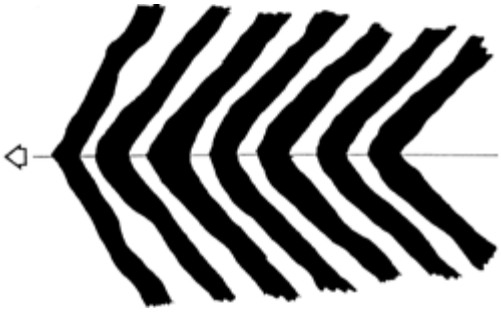
2) Mallard roofs can be especially troublesome by splitting at the tie in point. Instead of folding the strip of mallard that you have previously slightly straightened away from the feather stem; and then peeled (not cut.) off, try holding the trip ever so gently by thumb and index finger, so that the strip very slightly begins to cup. Place the slightly cupped strip carefully over the wing, but do not touch it to the wing. The peeled ends should be just beyond the tie in point., at the head and just barely touching. This is the only part of the feather strip that touches anywhere on the fly at this point. Now try to carefully catch the mallard just behind the peeled area with one or two wraps of thread. This will pull the strip down, cupping, but. not splitting it. Then, with a small paint. brush, paint saliva up and under the mallard as it lays over either side of the wings. This will pull and "glue" the strip into place. Be cautious that too much saliva is not used, because it will show by shrinking the barbules in the barbs and drawing the strip together.

FLORICAN BUSTARD SUBSTITUTE

By John Pike

Florican is not as "impossible" to obtain as Kori Bustard, but it is uncommon enough to make substitution necessary most of the time. The base for this feather is white turkey tail feathers, goose shoulders, or any similar material. These feathers often have lengths long enough to allow 'right' and 'left' wing fibers from the same feather. Wash the turkey feather, then dye it a moderate tan shade in RIT (#16). This gives the base color of the feather. If you wish to have a more orange color add a small amount of Orange to the tan dye bath (natural color ranges from true tan to pale tannishorange). The barring on the feather is created by the use of a HI-IMPACT brown marking pen. The bars on the Florican feather sweep downward from the tip of the feather in an inverted "V", running at right angles (more or less) to the feather fibers. To get the correct angle and width of the dark brown bars I placed a nicely marked Florican feather under a small pane of glass and outlined the barring from the leading edge of the feather. I flipped the glass over and copied the bars again in mirror image. I then placed the dyed turkey feather on the glass (the outline showed through the feather) and copied the bars with a brown marker onto the best side of the turkey feather. The water-based color did not bleed into the feather fibers, and did not mat the flues (such matting would prevent marrying of the fibers). A brief steaming on the back side (only).... instant, almost Florican (right and lefts) from one feather.

I have included with this material the outline template used for this feather, (the arrow on the template points to the top of the feather. There is also a copy of a natural feather so you can see the original barring). You may wish to create your own, using a pattern with finer barring in addition to the bold. I have found that this patterning isn't necessary to make the substitute look "real". If the feather you mark needs a second application of the brown marker you may find the fibers will mat. Even in Kelson type wing this is not a problem, as long as you "scruff" the matted fibers so they will marry. I also suggest that you do not use a feather section that has a brown mark on the tip. Unmarked tip fibers marry better.



MATERIAL SUBSTITUTION LIST

Blue Jay

Guinea breast or flank feathers dyed silver doctor blue. This is also a substitute for Kenya crested guinea feathers

Blue Chatterer

Kingfisher feathers, or white neck feathers from a ringneck pheasant dyed Kingfisher Blue. Also, various small parrots may have useful substitutes.

Bustard (Speckled = Kori)

Oak-brown mottled turkey tails or secondary wing feathers are excellent substitutes. Alternate is finely mottled peacock wing secondaries. (The "wrong" side of the peacock feather is a close match. It is better than the "good" side. But sometimes the feather fibers are soft at the tip, and do not marry well.)

Bustard (Florican)

Substitutes are made by dyeing a dark gray and white turkey wing feather, or side tail feather from a silver pheasant, creamy tan. Alternate method is to dye a white turkey tail, or goose feather, the base color; then mark the dark brown bars with a water based marking pen (see dyeing instructions).

Cock of the Rock

Bright orange dyed webby saddle or hen neck hackle. Color can vary to a reddish -orange.

Heron

Long fibered rump feathers from a ringneck pheasant, or schalapen [sic] hackle, dyed either gray or black. Also the ruff feathers from a Ruffed Grouse is a good substitute for black heron. For gray, blue eared pheasant is used; and, if available, victoria crown pigeon.

Indian Crow

Dyed feathers from the white band on a cock ringneck pheasant; or dyed hen hackles, or buff-colored body feathers from a hen pheasant dyed scarlet.

Jungle Cock

None.

Macaw

None.

Mallard (Bronze)

For simple strip-wings substitute brown-mottled turkey wing strips to create a more durable pattern.

Pintail (Flank)

Mallard flank and body feathers.

Peacock (Wing)

Gray mottled turkey tail is used as a substitute.

Swan

White turkey tail feathers, or goose shoulder (nashurias), dyed to the desired color.

Toucan

Small hen hackle, or white ringneck pheasant collar, dyed gold to golden orange. You only need to use one of these feathers in place of 6 of the natural. Also, various small yellow bird feathers, too include small parrot (Lori, parakeet, budgie) feathers.

Vulturine Guinea Fowl

None. Body feathers are lavender and black, solid blue, barred white and black; throat feathers are blue fringed.

DYES AND FORMULAS

GOOSE QUILLS - Yellow Veniards yellow

Red - Veniards red or scarlet; RIT cardinal and scarlet, mixed 50-50

Blue - Veniards kingfisher

Green - Veniards green highlander

Orange - Veniards orange; RIT orange or tangerine

BLUE CHATTERER - Veniards kingfisher (= silver doctor blue)

TOUCAN - Veniards light orange (RIT orange), or Veniards yellow (RIT yellow) with just a sprinkle of hot orange (RIT tangerine)

COCK OF THE ROCK - Veniards, 1 part yellow, 1/2 part hot orange. The feather is a deep bright orange (RIT bright yellow and orange)

ROGAN'S GREEN PARSON

From Famous Flies and Their Originators by T. Donald Overfield

TAG: Oval silver tinsel and red floss
TAIL: Topping and strands of tippet; teal; red, yellow and blue swan
BUTT: Black ostrich herl
RIBS: Medium oval silver and fine oval gold
BODY: One third orange floss, two thirds green peacock
HACKLE: Yellow and hot orange
THROAT: Jay
WINGS: Tippets; golden pheasant tail; red, white, blue and green swan. Bronze mallard. Topping.
SIDES: Pintail

BALLYSHANNON

From Famous Flies and Their Originators by T. Donald Overfield

TAG: Oval silver tinsel and blue floss
TAIL: Topping and Indian Crow
BUTT: Black ostrich herl
RIB: Broad oval silver tinsel
BODY: Hot orange floss
HACKLE: Magenta
THROAT: Kingfisher blue hackle
WINGS: Dark whitish grey-tipped turkey tail; Bustard; Golden Pheasant tail; red, yellow, blue swan; bronze mallard with a topping over.
SIDES: Pintail
CHEEKS: Jungle Cock

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STRAIGHT BODIES OR TAPERED BODIES?

Christopher Helm

As with many skills we learn, those first instructions by a respected teacher tend to be the pattern we follow when repeating the learned process. My first Atlantic Salmon fly tying class was at the '85 Conclave in State College, Pennsylvania. Trying to absorb all of the information and recall those same procedures and techniques several days later can be trying, even with notes scribbled on a pad of paper. In addition, we had a fairly large class which does not necessarily lend itself to a good learning situation. The following February I spent a snowy weekend in cold Holly, Michigan taking instruction, along with six others, from Ron Alcott on the art of tying Atlantic Salmon flies. Based on the time, effort and research Ron has given to the art of tying these elaborate, colorful patterns, a good student will tend to listen intently.

A facet of tying various components of the Atlantic Salmon that did not receive much attention in State College was the shape of the fly body. While I have an eye for shape, this aspect of tying the fly had never been a focus of mine. In viewing photographs of Atlantic Salmon flies, body shape was never noticed. Alcott emphasized with considerable vigor the need to slightly taper the body, which makes for an esthetically pleasing fly. He supported his feelings by his extensive research, which included reading and traveling to Scotland to speak with renowned tyers. He mentioned several authors including Hale and Tavener who espoused the tapered body. As a result of Alcott's strong belief, I adopted this technique in my own flies.

Several experienced tyers who have critiqued my flies ask me if I usually taper my bodies. This question called my attention to the fact that obviously many tyers do not taper their Atlantic Salmon fly bodies.

During the past couple of years as I did more Atlantic Salmon fly tying and reading about the subject, I have become more keenly aware that many aspects of tying are subject to debate. However, in this instance there is considerable written support that the body should be tapered. Hale states that "In all cases the body should taper slightly from the butt to the shoulder." As is evident from this statement, Hale made no exceptions to this procedure. Hale also refers to the tapered body in the same chapter in describing wrapping the body with floss.

In Tavener's book, he is comparing Hale and Kelson and briefly mentions body taper. Beyond this he does not elaborate.

Pryce-Tannatt does not devote a special portion of the book to body taper but does mention taper in tying in the gut eye and in the general instructions for the Black Ranger. He states that "A floss silk body should be quite smooth, free from all bumps or irregularities, and should taper very gradually from butt to head."

A tapered tinsel body is not any more difficult to wrap than a tapered floss body or a dubbed body. To aid the process and help secure the tinsel in place, coat the tapered underbody with liquid wax. The wax will help the tinsel adhere to the body. The underbody should be wrapped with white floss beginning one quarter the distance from the butt to the head. Alcott recommends using white 6/0 thread and marking the body at the 1/4, 1/2, 3/4, with a felt tip pen after building the underbody. Tie in the floss at 6:00 at the 1/4 mark, with the waste extending under the body up to within 1/4 in. of the head. Leave the thread at the tie in point (1/4 mark). Wind the floss forward making sure to keep it flat and overlap slightly. After winding forward, wind back to the 1/2 mark. Bring thread forward to tie off floss. Every effort should be made to keep the thread and floss as smooth as possible to help insure a smooth body. Spin the bobbin counterclockwise to unwind the thread.

Visual inspection is usually adequate to determine when the thread is flat. This process is repeated often, not just once or twice when preparing a complete fly. Now the remainder of the body may be completed.

All of this may be a matter of personal preference. Some flies look better with a straight body, others with a tapered body. If you have never prepared a tapered body, give it a try. Then you can decide if this approach is for you.

A METHOD FOR THE PRECISE PLACEMENT OF BODY HACKLE

Steve Brocco

On Salmon Flies the intimate association of the ribbing and the body hackle necessitates the precise tie in of the hackle so the rib will pick it up and at the same time be placed to maintain the symmetry and proportions of the fly.

In most cases the approximation of the second turn of ribbing tinsel is eyeballed and the hackle attached. The technique I use was fallen upon while dressing Crossfield's Black Silk, a pattern with a silk body, a rib and a body hackle.

Instead of attaching a single strand of silk at the front of the body and wrapping to the bend and back, I attach two strands of silk at the rear of the fly. With the bobbin at the front of the body make a trial run with the body rib. Once the rib is suitably set on, un wrap it back to the second turn to the precise spot where the body hackle will be tied in. Now wrap on, and I prefer, unwrap the tying thread back to this point. Unwrap the ribbing tinsel completely and catch it in the material clip. Tie in the body hackle at the designated point and wrap the thread to the front of the body. Wind one strand of silk forward, tie off and trim. Wind the second strand of silk forward to complete the body. Wind the rib forward; it will exactly meet the hackle while maintaining the ribbing proportions. Wrap the folded hackle immediately behind the rib.

This is a quick and easy method to deal with the body hackle tie in. It also has the advantage of wrapping a virgin (i.e. not handled) strand of silk on the outer layer of the body. This method can also be used with a dubbed body by leaving a separate dubbing thread or loop at the rear of the body.

A METHOD FOR MOUNTING A WING ON A SALMON FLY

Wayne Luallen

There are many ways to mount a wing on a typical featherwing Atlantic Salmon fly. The method shared here is mostly taken from Bill Hunter with some modifications of my own that suit my style.

Possibly the most important part of the wing is the foundation it is to be mounted on. If the foundation is not smooth and level, the wing may twist, buckle or protrude tips upward. The latter is most common with a body that is larger in diameter than the wing platform, for example, a seal body that doesn't taper off at the throat area.

What you must consider as foundation includes not only the tie-down area for body, tinsel and hackle materials, but also underwing stems and barbs. Voice of experience strongly urges to not cut off underwing waste until the main wing is mounted. If removed in advance, often the main wing will roll forward and down, forcing the tips up and ultimately crumpling what could have been a smooth, even

wing, particularly on the left slip. This is due to the thread under pressure sliding suddenly off and forward of the short platform that prematurely trimmed underwing butts establishes.

To help achieve a smooth foundation, a flat, untwisted thread is preferable. Wrapping a monocord type thread, such as Danville's Fly-Master 6/0, is easier for me to get flat than some of the new threads now available. As a righthand tier, I must take into account that Fly-Master comes slightly twisted to begin with, plus every wrap I make with the bobbin puts a clockwise twist in the thread. By counterspinning the bobbin, then enhancing the twist by running it through a pinched thumbnail and finger pad, I can clearly see the presence of any twist. Careful placement of materials that need to be secured can evenly and smoothly be distributed with flat thread wraps. Use as few thread wraps as possible to avoid bulk and lumps. Two slightly separated flat, firm wraps are far more secure than ten wraps directly on top of one another.

In marrying the barbs that make up the main wing, they should be equal in shape, taper and texture. In the wing strip as a whole, the angle at the tip, width at the tip and width at the mounting point should be the same. If similar wing materials are not used on both sides, not only will the wing look out of proportion, but also may not mount properly. Avoid, for instance, using soft, well-tapered barbs of turkey on one side and untapered barbs from the tip of the feather on the other. Also, note the thickness /texture at the base of the barbs when trimmed. If the right strip is larger and coarser or finer and smaller than the left, select another feather so they match. If the strip on one side, when cut at the rachis, is 4" long and the other strip is 2" long, beware. The useful part of the 4" barbs when tied in will be in an area of much softer and finer texture than the 2" barbs.

When pairing the married feather strips to mount, be sure to pre-hump the slips individually to match themselves as well as the desired end product. Be certain they are of equal length and width from tip to butt.

As a righthand tier, I hold the slips by their upper edges so that they "cup open" at the bottom, more so toward butts and closing toward tips. Now, humped and cupped, they are lowered down over the underwing and/or body. The slips are held by left index (or middle) finger and thumb at a point such that I can slightly roll my fingers open to accept the tying thread. In other words, .the fingers should be very close to where they need to be in securing the wing with thread. In my case, the tips of my fingers will be about even with the eye, blind eye or return loop. It is hard to describe an exact placement. The size and shape of your fingers dictate that, as much as anything. I prefer not to let the slips go once lowered onto the hook. If handled, they become easily misaligned, and one invariably changes its shape as opposed to the other. If mounted with each curved in different humps, it is extremely difficult to cleanly realign them later. As to placement of the slips with the hook shank, it is preferable to place them level with the upper two thirds of the shank and tightly adjacent to the underwing if present. If there is no underwing, it is preferable to place them a bit higher on the shank. Otherwise, due to the outward arch produced by pressure against the hook, the wings will buckle. If a less three-dimensional look is desired, try to keep the wings as much toward the top of the shank as possible, period. All the above applies whether the hook is blind or loop.

Note the position of the fingers holding the wing onto the fly body. The more vertical the fingers from a true parallel position with the shank, the higher the wing will arch upward. The more level, the lower the wing will lay.

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A METHOD FOR MOUNTING A WING ON A SALMON FLY PART II

By Wayne Luallen

Everyone's great fear comes with the next step. If proper thread placement and smooth thread under controlled, even pressure is maintained and if the platform and underwing (if present) are as previously described, wing mounting should go very smoothly.

It is most important to have the thread as far to the left (for a righthand tier) as you intend for it ever to be. It is unwise to go backward over a mounted wing with thread. If you do, don't be surprised if it

buckles the wing. Be sure the thread is counterspun so that it is flat. Flat thread will slide easier on the shoulder of the wing than will twisted thread, thus making the wing collapse to be smooth and even.

The wing mount is accomplished through a simple series of three soft loops and two firm additional wraps slightly forward of the initial three. The first wrap is begun by bringing approximately 21/2" of thread up and back at about a 15 degree angle. (The reason for the 21/2" is so that all three wraps can be done in a series of flowing motions. You don't want to have to play around with a bobbin during this step.) Bring it down the other side at the same angle and back to the exact point the thread came from. Now bring the thread under the shank and straight up 90' to the shank. The thread is placed and held between the fingers and the wing slips by first rolling back the thumb to pinch the thread going up, then rolling back down onto it, followed by the same process with the finger on the other side. It is wise to leave just a slight amount of loose thread arching over the wing, not touching it. All the while, the wing slips are held firmly in position. If anything slips, start over now. If satisfied with the wing and thread positions, begin to pull the thread straight up under even, constant pressure. Do not release pressure on the wing slips but do slightly roll the fingers back as the thread slides down and forward. Once it is firmly drawn, repeat this process. Then, repeat it a third time. These three wraps are almost exactly on top of one another, preferably very slightly progressing forward, never backward. After the third wrap is firmly drawn up, let the bobbin hang down the near side, thus removing one-half of a wrap. Still holding the wing with firm pressure, grasp with thumb and index of the other hand the butts of the wing and underwing, which will have now twisted away from you, and bring them back up and twist them back to the original position. Don't be afraid to apply what may seem undue pressure. In fact, it helps to work them back and forth a few times, as long as the wing proper is still firmly held. This may loosen the three wraps. If so, remove two and rewrap them without soft loops this time. (The wing has not been released to this point.) Now, somewhat less viciously draw back and up the wing butts again. Take two additional, secure wraps, separated from the initial three by the distance you wish the head to cover. If the butts slip around again, draw them back up; remove one or both of the most recent wraps and put them on again. (What removing and replacing wraps does is further crush the barbs to better secure them. It also makes for a cleaner and smaller head. Additional wraps on top of these do not add security, only bulk.)

You can now finally remove your hand holding the wing slips, and take a look. Everything should have fallen cleanly into place. If you are not satisfied, remove the five wraps and do it again. Possibly, the wing is too long or one side was not even with the other after all. Maybe one side buckled. Maybe the hump is too flat or the wing is too high at the tips. Don't be afraid to remount. A wing is easy to remount, fairly easy to shorten, but not easy to lengthen.

If the wing is too short or badly buckled, a way to start over was shown me by Greg Bevards You simply steam the wing slips! I have brought a pair back from failure as many as three times this way. Odds are, as was the case that time, the problem is the foundation, not the slips. If all else fails, you can marry new slips.

Once satisfied with position of both slips, again grasp firmly the wing. Now, remove the last two wraps. With very sharp scissors remove the wing and underwing butts exactly where these wraps were once laid. The more vertical the cut, the more ball-like the head; the more angled the cut, the more potential for a teardrop or tapered head. I prefer the former. Some choose not to cut off the butts now but wait until almost everything is mounted (shoulders, cheeks, roof, etc.). I think that is risky, since there is just that much more to slip when trimming finally is done. Once trimmed, while still holding the wing slips, paint water or saliva but not head cement, onto the remaining stubs up to the point of the first three wraps. Be careful particularly if using water, since it is less viscous than saliva; do not let it wick up into the wing proper. What saliva or water does is slightly soften, but especially it collapses the barbules on the barbs. The problem with head cement is that it hardens the butts, thus not allowing any further collapse. Also, it may produce rough spots that can catch and fray flattened thread. Now take two flat, criss-crossing wraps over the face of the trimmed butts with one additional flat wrap just behind them. This forms the taper that will ultimately shape the head.

Finally, release the wing, view your handiwork and complete the fly.

OF TAILS AND TOPPINGS

by (A tyer of the salmon fly) Ptiloris

One of the simplest and most inexpensive ways to make a salmon fly look great is to have a properly shaped golden pheasant crest. Many tyers literally spend hours creating a "perfect" fly only to use a topping that is crooked, twisted or ill-shaped. In the following I will describe several methods of straightening and using golden pheasant crests for tails and toppings.

Bear in mind all crests come from living bird. Unless the bird was a genetic deviant, its crest feathers were straight. It's only through rough handling and improper storage that the crests have become crooked. Straightening the crest involves relaxing the feather, allowing it to resume its natural position, then holding that position.

One method of accomplishing this is with a steam iron. (Note: for this method use very HOT steam, not the type that comes from vaporizer type devices.) Fill the iron with water. If your local water supply has a heavy mineral content, you may want to use distilled water as it will prolong the life of the iron. Set the iron to one of the higher steam settings and allow it to warm.

Now to straighten a crest: hold the crest horizontally against a table or some other flat surface that will not be damaged by the hot steam, in a position opposite to the present irregular shape. Pass the steam slightly above the feather. Avoid touching the feather with the iron as it might burn. Remember, whatever position the feather is held in when the steam is applied is the new shape the feather assumes.

This method works very well and is quick. Many crests can be straightened at once, and if stored properly, will remain that way until needed. There is one drawback to this method. If the feather is exposed to high humidity over a period of time, it will tend to revert back to its crooked shape. This occurs because the feather was set in a crooked position much longer than it was set in a straightened position.

The second crest straightening method is allowing the feather to remain in a relaxed position until ready to use, then setting it in the proper position. To accomplish this, pluck the crests and place them in a jar with the following solution: 4 parts of water, 1 part alcohol, and 1 or 2 drops of glycerin. The alcohol helps prevent the solution from souring, but it will remove some of the natural oils from the feathers. That's where the glycerin helps, but it's really potent stuff, so use sparingly. (Note: glycerin is available in most drug stores.)

When a fly is started, remove a few crests from the jar and place them on their sides on a horizontal surface. By the time you get to the topping, the crests will be dry and straight.

Now that you know how to straighten crest feathers, here are a few hints for using them. Many patterns specifically call for two or three feathers in the topping. Well, why not do the same for the tail? I have found most flies look best when at least two crest feathers are used in both the tail and topping, even if the pattern doesn't specify it. Also, crest feathers follow the same rules we 'use on other feathers. There are lefts, rights and centers; and each should be used accordingly.

I hope the preceding will be of benefit to salmon fly tyers. If any instruction remains unclear, or if there are any questions, please feel free to ask them in this newsletter and I will be most happy to respond.

REPAIR FOR JUNGLE COCK SPLITS

by John Pike

MATERIALS NEEDED: 3M Paper First Aid Tape 1/2in x 180in

Hospital name: MICROPORE

SALLY HANSEN "No Chip" acrylic top coat nail polish (orange bottle cap).

1. Pull the loose feather fibers back and away from the "eye".

2. Hold the split eye fibers together, with one hand, and gently tape them in place from the back side of the feather. Do this with a small (1/16" wide) piece of tape.

3. Now tape the upper portion of the feather in the same manner.

4. Place the eye, best side up, on a sheet of plain paper and paint the split portion with the clear nail polish. Gently blot off any excess polish and set aside to dry.

5. When dry, remove all tape. Smooth feather fibers in place between dampened finger tips. Form damp feather over a large soda straw, set aside to dry (this reforms the natural curve in the feather.)

This method places a coat of hard lacquer over the entire surface of the feather without distortion and allows the feather to dry flat. The old method of drawing the eye through a little cement on the tips of your fingers wiped off most of the polish and did not hold the feather fibers together.

INDEX TO "THE BARON" TAPE

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A FEW IDEAS ON SCHLAPPEN

By Wayne Luallen

Upon asking people in the fly tying world what a schlappen feather actually is, I have received numerous blank stares. From my understanding, it is a transitional feather between the saddle and the tail of a rooster. Unlike the tail, the rachis is narrow like a saddle feather. Unlike the saddle, it is all web, like a tail feather. Length of feather and of barb will vary a great deal.

My first introduction to schlappen came through Bill Hunter years ago. He suggested using it for throats on feather-wing and hair-wing Salmon flies primarily as false hackles. My preference has been to wrap

them tip first and folded. Others have suggested a variety of applications and techniques, some of which we will discuss.

When using schlappen as a throat, if wrapped, you will find numerous advantages over neck hackles. First, there is generally a fairly consistent barb length and a very fine rachis. Also, they are soft of barb and fairly flat so that when folded and wrapped there is usually little crossover effect of barbs as seen with folded waterfowl and guinea feathers. A disadvantage is the opacity of color they create due to their fullness of barbules (web). Some prefer to tie them in by the tip and wrap, but first strip the side that would normally be folded over. This may not resolve the opacity problem, but the possibility of a crossover effect can be eliminated, and depending on the feather, result in a more swept look to the throat. A possible disadvantage to consider is that more room will be required for the rachis to achieve the necessary fullness. Several tiers have been bleaching schlappen. This removes the barbules, giving the look of neck hackle without the taper of barbs and larger stem diameter.

Some have used schlappen bleached and folded, or unbleached with one side stripped for body hackles. All it requires is careful selection of a well-tapered, fairly short feather. It gives an interesting effect on some bodies, but the inherent sparkle of a neck or saddle feather won't be there, bleached or not.

If you wish to bleach, bear in mind that it is not an exact science. Be sure to dilute the bleach at least 50% with water. Also, have vinegar and/or baking soda-and-water solution at hand before you begin. Some dyed feathers during bleaching will bleed a bit, depending on how they were dyed and what color. Experiment with a few feathers, possibly one at a time, before attempting any in quantity. Try various amounts of time (one feather at 10 seconds, then another at 20, then 30, etc.) the whole while agitating the feather(s). Check your results by removing the feather from the bleach and immediately placing them in the neutralizing solution, agitate, then wash in warm soapy water, rinse and blot dry. To finish drying, a blow dryer works fine, or consider dipping the feather in acetone for instant results. Then wrap the bleached feathers on hooks to see which amount of bleaching time gives the look you prefer.

Generally, schlappen is purchased pre-dyed but is readily available strung, off-white in color for your dying pleasure. Some strings will have feathers fairly long and gradually tapered or possibly 2" to 3" shorter with typically rounded tips. In either, you will find feathers of different taper, some variance in amount of web and a variety of barb lengths. (A few tiers have been known to use it as a heron substitute.) Some will have stems that are objectionably large to wrap. Save those feathers for false-hackled hair-wings, streamers and wet flies. Also, any of the schlappen feathers will be found useful in a variety of bass and saltwater flies as well.

SUBSTITUTE FOR OSTRICH HERL IN BUTTS

By William Chinn, Jr.

Many Salmon Fly Tiers have difficulty, it appears, in getting ostrich herl in anything but huge, ugly, and/or sparse. My preference is for tight, short in barbule and fuller herl barbs. Most available herl is of poor quality. Thus a substitute of better feather structural quality might be worth consideration.

Through the years some have used wool or chenille as a substitute of more durability, but inferior look. The pattern for the Sir Herbert differs in that it calls for Peacock Sword for the butt. I tie the sword barb in tip first (remembering that there are right and left barbs) and carefully wrap forward. The barb is so full that even with its inherent brokenness, the end result is a compact well-proportioned, nicely iridescent herl butt.

Later doing a Popham I remembered this. But instead of using the broken barbs near the tip of the feather, I went on down the stem to the barbs more similar to those on an eyed Peacock feather. The iridescent green, short, compact herl butt gave a most desirable look to this multi-jointed fly.

My intent is to continue using it in other flies, possibly dyeing it, which may give the darker color, but leave some natural iridescence.

ANTIQUE AND MYSTERY PATTERNS

Pattern Dressings from Uncommon Sources

By Marvin Nolte

Not everyone has all the resource materials they desire when it comes to reproducing historical salmon patterns. For your consideration the following is quoted directly from A Book on Angling by Francis Francis, 1920 edition edited by Sir Herbert Maxwell.

THE DOCTOR. This is a very general and deserved favorite. Commencing, then, at the bend of the hook, tie in as a tag three or four turns of fine gold twist. Tail, a single gold pheasant topping, over this a turn of scarlet crewel; body, pale blue floss silk, with hackle a shade or two darker, wound on from tail to head (this varied at times with blue jay's feather); silver tinsel (in large flies of all kinds the tinsel may be rendered more conspicuous by the addition of some twist wound on beside it). At the shoulder a brown grouse, partridge, or bustard hackle may be wound on; a blue jay is sometimes used over the blue hackle. The wing is a mixed wing, containing fibers of bustard, dark turkey, argus pheasant, and claret, blue and yellow fibers of stained swan feathers, the latter predominating. In smaller flies mallard and pintail are introduced. The head is of scarlet crewel.

THE PARSON. This is a very showy fly, and is used chiefly on the Erne, but it is a capitol fly anywhere where a showy fly is required. It is on the Erne rather a generic name for a series of flies than for any special one, as we have there, green parsons, and blue parsons, and golden parsons, and so on. The Parson being merely significant of plenty of toppings in the wing. The Golden Parson, however, is my idea of the fly, and this I will describe.

Tag, silver tinsel and mauve floss; tail, two toppings, a few sprigs of tippet and a kingfisher; body, two turns of golden floss silk, then golden pig's wool, merging into orange; golden orange hackle over the wool, red-orange hackle over that, and two or three or more short toppings tied in at the breast, instead of a shoulder hackle; wing, a tippet feather with a cock of the rock (not the squared feather) on either side, and as many toppings as you can pile on--seven or eight or more if you like. These are often tied on the turn bent inwards at Ballyshannon, and it gives them more play in the water. Kingfisher's feathers on either cheek and blue macaw ribs; black head. This, however, is decidedly a topping parson, a sort of bishop or archbishop parson, in fact, and not for everyday use; we only bring him out when the feelings of the salmon, having resisted all ordinary persuasiveness, require to be very strongly appealed to. But if you substitute a golden olive hackle, with a medium claret above that, and blue jay at shoulder, and reduce the number of toppings, and tie into the wing a couple of gold pheasant saddle feathers over the tippet feather, a capitol working parson, a sort of curate, is produced, fit for hard every-day work.

Mr. Maxwell very kindly subsequently sent me the following: Add to the Minnick flies for a low bright water the following, known as the 'Dusty Miller'.

Tag, silver tinsel, dark olive floss; tail, one topping; butt, black ostrich; body, embossed silver timsel (sic), gold thread; dark olive hackle, gallina at shoulder; wing, gold pheasant tail, mallard, teal, green parrot and lavender swan, jungle cock at cheek; head black.

HEAD CEMENTS

By G. Allen Mankins

A considerable choice of lacquers, cements, resins and varnishes are made today for fly tying.

Substances referred to as head cements are usually, though not always, relatively fast-drying lacquers that require a thinner supplied by the manufacturer. The best head cements have a plastic base. However, plastic products vary a great deal, and their durability depends entirely on the type and quality of the plastic used in making them. This also governs their water absorption qualities.

True head cements can be employed to finish completed heads, to cement the butts of hair wings and to add permanence to critical tying-in operations.

When applying head varnish or head cement to the fly head, for optimum results give it a thin coat first and a heavier coat when the first is dry. Allow 24-hours crying time for the slower-drying head finishes. A thin first coat soaks into the wax coated thread and cuts the wax, to some extent. Subsequent coats, over the dry, thinner first coat, will seal and fill the entire head giving you a really professional-looking job.

Relatively thick, fast-drying, cement is frequently the choice for cementing the butts of hair wings, cheeking, and eyeing materials. Some tiers merely let a container of head cement evaporate some, to thicken a little for this job. A word of caution: do read label warnings and avoid prolonged, or repeated breathing of vapors.

Lacquers are sometimes used for covering the heads. If the lacquer is of real quality, it will work reasonably well. Real lacquer is produced from the sap of the LAC tree that is native to China. Several thin coats are best in order to obtain preferred results.

There's been a trend of using epoxy cements for finishing heads. A single coat of epoxy dries overnight; resulting in a glass-hard, smooth, shiny finish. The epoxy can be colored after mixing the equal parts of resin and hardener. Use the minimum amount to cover the head as it will flow slowly until it sets up. Curing can be accelerated by heating. By varying the normal ratio of 1:1 (adhesive to hardener) a rigid, or flexible set can be obtained. For a more flexible set, use less hardener with the resin. Bonding time will be increased.

Shellac and similar liquids are not practical for covering heads. Shellac cannot be kept stable, once it is mixed in a liquid form, for more than a year without losing most of it's qualities. When you purchase shellac you have no way of determining how old it is. Shellac also has limited resistance to weathering.

Liquid vinyl cement is a clear, flexible cement that is very tough and works better than "standard" head cements. Less is required to cover a head and it gives a smooth, glossy, tough head. Jungle Cock eye nails coated with vinyl cement stay flexible and resist splitting.

Acrylic spray is being used more and more as a fixative for feathers. Applied moderately, the feather's general color, shape and texture are not altered to any great extent; yet the barbs can hardly be pulled apart.

Another hard-setting, good-penetrating varnish is the polyurethane group. These cannot be thinned down once they start to harden. Pour out only the amount you need for immediate use and replace the lid on the container tightly.

CLOSE-UP FLASH PHOTOGRAPHY OF SALMON FLY PATTERNS

By John Pike

Of all the methods of close-up photography, the single most useful technique is a combination method referred to as "close-up flash". It combines, with other features, speed of operation, extreme depth of field, and the use of slow speed films to get quality images. Although it may appear confusing, it is quite simple to learn. You will need a SLR camera, some type of close-up lens (or extension tube), and a small electronic flash unit. With practice, the whole process of composing, lighting, and exposing can be accomplished in less than a minute.

The first step is to determine the necessary magnification. Since you know the size of the film (about 1 X 1.5 inches), you need only measure the size of your subject and then divide that into the film size, to get the magnification. As an example: if a fly pattern 3 inches long fills the entire frame length (1.5 inches) the magnification is X1/2. The camera can be hand held, or a tripod used for support, the fly can be left in the tying vise.

A number of camera functions are tied to the focal length of the lens. One of these is the f-number, or relative aperture of the lens. That number (engraved on the lens housing) is the ratio between the focal length and the diameter of the aperture. A lens that has an aperture of one-half it's focal length is said to be an f/2 lens. In small subject photography the speed, or largest aperture of the lens, is not important. What is important is how effectively small the f/number of the lens can be made. Producing an image through a small aperture has two basic effects. The subject is focused on the film with the "sharpest" image; and the focus depth of field is greatest.

When doing most types of close-up photography it is nearly always desirable to have the greatest depth of field possible (that is having as much of the subject rendered as sharply as possible). Most normal lenses close down to f/16 or f/22, though some macro-types may go down to f/32. However, the relative aperture (f-number) with the lens abnormally altered by a close-up attachment is called the "effective aperture". This value must be calculated to get the correct exposure setting for using electronic flash. Effective apertures for smaller common f-stops, at frequently used magnifications have been calculated in the table below.

EFFECTIVE APERTURE

AT MARKED f-NUMBER AT X1/4 X1/2 X3/4 X1

f/16 f/19 f/22 f/27 f/32

f/22 f/27 f/32 f/38 f/45

f/32 f/38 f/45 f/55 f/64

In order to calculate the correct exposure using electronic flash, it is first necessary to know the basic light output of the flash. That value is called the "guide number", and indicates the amount of effect a particular flash will have on a film of given speed.

Electronic flash units will have one guide number for each film speed unless there is more than one power setting. The manufacturer usually only lists one guide number, for a specific film. There is an easy way of determining any other guide number using the exposure calculation dial on the back of the flash unit. Simply follow these steps:

1. Set the film ASA speed on the calculator.
2. Look for the f-number opposite the ten foot distance mark.
3. Your guide number for that film is equal to the f-number times ten.

Knowing the effective aperture and flash guide number will allow you to calculate how far from the subject your flash needs to be for any film you use. The formula below uses an example of a f/16 lens making a X1/4 image.

SYMBOLS DEFINITIONS EXAMPLES

GN Flash guide number 32

EA Effective aperture 19 (f/19)

FD Flash-subject distance ?

FORMULA FD = GN/EA

FD = 32/19

FD = 1.68 feet from subject

In terms of accuracy for exposure purposes a close approximation of the calculated flash distance is all that is needed. If your film, magnification, and flash source never change you only have to do this calculation once.

There are three things to consider when using electronic flash in this manner: the power of the flash unit, proper synchronization of the flash and color correction, and close flash effect correction.

The type of flash used should be the smallest and cheapest electronic unit that is available. Large power output, or automation, is not needed. If you currently have a thyristorized automatic unit, it should be used in the manual (M) mode. Basic flash power is related to your choice of film. For ease of operation it is best to have a flash-to-subject distance similar to the camera-to-subject distance. A high-powered flash used with fast film will have an inconveniently long flash distance and exposure will become inaccurate. If your ASA 25 flash guide number is not greater than 45 you will obtain satisfactory results using ASA 64, or ASA 100 speed film. For any guide number greater that 45 it is better to use a

slower film like ASA 25. Be sure to synchronize your shutter for electronic flash operation. Choose whatever shutter speed you wish, however, speeds less than 1/30 second should not be hand held.

Color correction of your flash unit may be necessary. Unless the flash tube, or its covering are definitely yellowish in color the output of the unit will almost certainly be too blue to match daylight type films. Film manufacturers recommend a corrective Wratten 81A or 81B filter. I prefer a less expensive CC20Y gelatin filter, cut and taped to the flash head. Either will work.

Two types of exposure compensation may be needed for this type of flash use. If you use a corrective filter (regardless of the type chosen from those listed), a one-third stop exposure correction is necessary. The second correction is needed for small flash units having an ASA 25 flash guide number of 85 or less. These small flash units were not originally designed to be used with suggested slow films and small apertures. Their efficiency is reduced when they are used very close up. That loss amounts to halving the recommended flash guide number of the unit. It doesn't matter what the guide number is, as long as you know its value.

As an example assume you had a flash guide number of 40 for ASA 64 film. Halve that to obtain the new guide number of 20. Reduce that by another estimated one-third stop for filter correction (if used). That gives a final working guide number of about 17. If you have an effective aperture of f/22 the formula will give:

FD = GN/EA

FD = 17/22

FD = 0.77 feet (about 9 inches)

Once you have determined the desired magnification it is a simple matter to set the camera to the smallest f-stop, focus on the subject, hand hold the flash at the desired angle and distance, and expose the film. This entire operation can be accomplished with a hand-held camera and flash through experience. For a static subject a tripod is sufficient, the flash is hand held only at any desired angle. You may find that the best photos are made with the light coming from the head of the pattern. If you prefer to have reflected light on your subject, make sure the flash is pointed at a shallow angle and place a piece of crumpled aluminum foil on the opposite side of the fly. In this type of close-up photography back lighting is not necessary, and may actually cause an over exposure of the film.

Because your camera, lens, flash and subject size will not vary the distance calculation need only be done once for your equipment. Getting just the image you want is left to your artistic talent.

MORE ON GOLDEN PHEASANT TOPPINGS . . .

One of the readers that wishes to remain anonymous sent in the following:

"For Golden Pheasant crest feathers that come off the cape twisted, to the degree that they are unusable for toppings and tails, they can be straightened by first soaking the feather in water, then laying the topping on a porous board in the desired shape. Cover the topping with a thin piece of cardboard with a weight on top, such as a book. When dry store loosely in plastic boxes."

Eric Taverner suggests, in Tying Flies for Salmon . . .

"Soak the toppings in warm water, or in your mouth; the latter is better. Then stick the toppings on ... tubes or jars, selecting the sizes appropriate to feather and the curve it is desired to set in. Be sure that the feather is clinging to the glass and in the same plane as the circumference of the surface and that all the fibres are close together. Leave them fall off, which they will do only when they are properly dry. Before tying down a topping, nick the stem close to the lowest fibres by holding it with a pair of pliers and bending the fibres back; it can then be easily and securely fastened."

And from John Pike...

"You may desire to have the barbs of the topping you use open and showing on the sides of the fly you have tied. A very few toppings naturally occur this way, but most likely you will have to create this effect. Set the curve in the topping by the manner suggested by Taverner, slightly smaller than desired for the

pattern being tied. When dry, place the topping on a thin piece of closed-cell foam that has been securely cemented to a balsa wood sheet. Beginning at the base of the feather, pin the topping to the board using insect pins and/or thin pieces of porous paper in the same manner as spreading insect wings for mounting. The best paper to use is that used in conjunction with women's hair rollers. Using pins and paper pieces, arc the topping, spreading the barbs, to the shape you desire. With the topping securely pinned to the board steam the topping for a few moments to set the new shape you have created, then set aside to dry briefly. Store the formed toppings loose, in a covered box.

The Salmon Flyer
Vol. 2 - No.3, Summer, 1990

SILVER TINSEL BODIES

By Wayne Luallen

The question has been raised why some tiers, including myself, wrap tinsel bodies (such as the Mar Lodge, Silver Doctor, etc.) from front to back to front again. This is a most valid question when one looks at some of the historical references.

Pryce-Tannatt's method suggested wrapping from back to front only. He emphasized avoiding overlap and yet that "...each turn of tinsel must fit close...".

Kelson said back to front is proper over tapered floss "...to secure absolute neatness." Also, "broad flat tinsel" is beveled at one end "a good quarter of an inch in length."

Hale had a similar method. The tinsel was wound back to front over floss padding of "true taper", and the beveled tinsel was to be "tied in with the taper to the left." Actually he describes two methods, but both advance the tinsel from back to front.

J.J. Hardy also tapered the end of the tinsel and wound it from back to front, or, "...from left to right up the body." He too underpadded the body with floss "...in order to level up and form a smooth surface for the tinsel to lie on."

Eric Taverner follows suit in wrapping from back to front over a floss base, but says nothing about beveling the tinsel.

Then there were Francis Francis and Sir Herbert Maxwell, both of which gave no specific direction on the subject.

Finally comes Poul Jorgensen. He too suggested tapering the end of the tinsel, but unlike the rest he shows tying from front to back to front, "...like the floss."

Another question recently raised was which do I prefer, metal or mylar tinsel? The answer to that and the initial question go along together.

Bill McMillan, a superb steelhead fly tier, showed me some years ago that he preferred wrapping mylar tinsel from back to front. He avoided separation/gaps by very slightly overlapping the mylar. It was pliable enough that it could be molded in such a way as to not look overlapped except on very close inspection.

I respect Bill with utmost regard, but never felt comfortable using that method on anything but fishing flies. Also, I found mylar slippery upon itself to the point that it could easily separate or slip onto an adjacent wrap unintentionally, many times going unnoticed until further steps had been completed; a most frustrating situation. My hope was that by wrapping as Jorgensen suggested, from front to back to front, might improve matters. This did avoid, through a double layer of tinsel, any bare spots; but it did not solve the overlap.

I had been opposed to metal tinsel due to it's tendency to cut thread at a most inopportune moment. But, with experience, I learned how to better handle it so that thread cutting is now a rare occurrence.

My approach is to taper the end of the 16-gauge or smaller tinsel, tying at the front on the near side with three wraps and with the taper to the right. I then wind over a flat, smooth thread base back to the back

of the body or joint, make a clean turn of direction, return to the front, remove all three wraps holding the tapered end, replace those three wraps to now tie off both ends and trim them.

Now the fine tuning part: the metal tinsel is easier for me to control in this fashion because as I wrap every five to six wraps I can slide adjacent wraps securely against, but not overlapping on another. A critical area is the turn around. The problem is having a broad tinsel overlap and smash the butt, come up short, or if very lucky on rare occasion be just right. I have found that by using narrower tinsels the turn around is easier in and of itself. Also reaching it cleanly is easier. By adjusting the tightness or very slight separation of the wraps coming from the front, I can always be in the right place when I need to be. The turn around is made of three wraps. The first goes back meeting the butt, followed by a wrap perpendicular to the shank, followed by the first actual forward wrap. Again, especially with narrow tinsel, it is easily and cleanly achieved. The wrap back up, periodically sliding the wraps back into one another for a very tight, flat body that shows no separations or overlaps.

So why go to the extra trouble to make the extra wraps? History doesn't suggest it. I suppose, in my opinion, it is a nicer end product if executed will. I confess it is more difficult. I would encourage you to try both ways and see which works the best for you. We must remember that with salmon flies there are no absolutes except those we make for ourselves. If you doubt that, I raise a simple question: what is a traditional salmon fly?

Then one final teaser: if you tie only back to front, where will you start the tinsel? Would it be on the top "above the ribbing" as Hale suggested, or "next to the oval" on the side as Kelson suggested, or " on the undersurface of the hook-shank" as Pryce-Tannatt states'? And does it matter.

POTPOURRI

BOOK ON ANGLING by Francis Francis - concerning care of fine scissors: "They should be kept in a leather sheath, and out of the ken of all females, or they will be looked on as lawful spoil and degraded to lace work, or to some hideous muslin enchantment designed to entrap some wretched gudgeon."

- From Wayne Luallen

DYEING FIERY BROWN

On page 47 of A Guide to Salmon Flies (By John Buckland and Arthur Oglesby, the Crowood Press, 1990) there is a color plate which includes an old Fiery Brown. In describing the fly the authors state "There are wonderful stories about trying to find the 'real' fiery brown which has a reputation for being the most taking of colours. It is a sort of search for the Holy Grail."

If the colors in that plate are true there is a simple dyeing process for getting darned close to the Grail. Use Tincture of Iodine (yes, the antiseptic that upholds the name ‘fiery’) diluted with about twenty parts of distilled water. Dunk your clean seal into the solution without heat or additives (no vinegar required) and leave it. I left mine an hour without a problem. Rinse and let dry. A small bottle of Iodine will not dye very much seal, but it will turn that seal fiery brown.

- From Marvin Nolte

PALMERED HACKLES

Ever wonder when Palmering a body hackle on a Salmon Fly where the term "Palmer" came from? You have? (Whew!). Well, you're in luck, because I think there's an answer. In my dictionary Palmer is a noun and is defined as "A person wearing crossed Palm leaves as a sign of his pilgrimage to the Holy Land." Alex Simpson, in Scotland, told me that the Crusaders of the 11th - 13th Century were called "Palmers". Alex went on to say that "Caterpillars which are imitated with stiff
hackles, in olden days, were called Palmers because on being hatched, straight away they go on a pilgrimage for food like the Pilgrims who traveled all over the Holy Land."

Then as a final note my dictionary defines a Palmer Worm as "A caterpillar that suddenly appears in great numbers devouring herbage." - From Wayne Luallen

ABOUT POLISHING TINSEL

Last issue a question was raised about polishing tarnished tinsel. Two answers were received that may help out. Each answer takes a different viewpoint. Choose which is best for you.

From Alec Jackson -

"Someone asks about cleaning and polishing tinsels. To which I respond if tinsel needs cleaning and polishing then you have the wrong stuff. In my opinion the only tinsel worth having has MADE IN FRANCE and VERNI stamped or branded on the spool (VERNI means it has been varnished by the maker). Herter's used to be my source and I still have tinsel bought from them over 20 years ago for $1.29 per ounce spool (Keep it wrapped in foil). Today the only source of such tinsel I know of is Bill Hunter's (at least while Bill owned the store). Expect to pay over $30.00 per ounce if you buy in bulk - say 4 ounces and up of each type.

Just because sly shops say they have French tinsel don't believe them. Most of the tinsel sold as French tinsel will deteriorate with time. Always look for MADE IN FRANCE and VERNI stamped or branded on the bobbin (I've only seen the real thing on wooden bobbins). Insist on VERNI - varnished tinsel."

And from Dave (no last name) -

"I was fortunate enough to acquire some French tinsel awhile back and in looking it over I noticed how dull and tarnished a few spools of the gold flat and oval tinsel compared to the others! So I bought a small can of BRASSO and with a paper towel rubbed it along the tinsel to coat it well, then I let it dry so it looked like it had a light coating of dust on the tinsel. After this I drew the tinsel through a soft dust cloth and Wah Lah! Just like new again. I'm not sure how long it will stay that way without redoing it again, but it has been six months and I haven't noticed any discoloration in the tinsel.

Of course if you really wanted to make sure your tinsel doesn't tarnish you can put a drop or two of Fleximent on your fingers and draw your tinsel through it to give it a light even coat of lacquer. But don't go over the lacquer with Brasso because it melts the lacquer and ,you're back to square one again."

The Salmon Flyer
Vol. 2 - No.4, Autumn, 1990

KELSON'S DESCRIPTION OF MAJOR TRAHERNE's SALMON FLIES

from THE FISHING GAZETTE

By Sol Shamilzadeh

Twelve years before he was to write his magnum opus The Salmon Fly, George M. Kelson started writing a number of articles on fly patterns in the "Fishing Gazette" in 1884. The, first of these articles by Kelson would come to include eighteen salmon patterns by his good friend Major Traherne.

Three of these patterns - The "Blue Bell," the "Black Prince," and the "Chatterer" would later be included in his tome. Moreover, the "Tippetiwitchet" would undergo a name change and the elimination of blue chatterer in the cheeks and appear in 1896 as the "Golden Butterfly." And while Kelson would not refer to the "Blue Boyne" and "Fra Diavolo" (Traherne's favorite pattern) in the "Fishing Gazette" articles, he would come to include them later in his book.

Herewith then is a list of Major Traherne's patterns as published by Kelson in the "Fishing Gazette."

#1 - BLUEBELL (see The Salmon Fly)

#2 - JUNO

Tag: Silver twist, and blue silk the same color as the cheeks.
Tail: Topping
Butt: Black herl
Body: Orange silk half-way (same shade as the rind of a darkish orange); and yellow silk the same tone as this hackle

Hackle: Yellow macaw, from the yellow silk Ribbed: Silver lace, and silver tinsel Throat: Blue macaw
Wings: Golden pheasant toppings Sides: Jungle fowl
Cheeks: Kingfisher Horns: Blue macaw Head: Black herl

#3 - GITANA

Tag: Silver twist, and red silk the same colour as the points of the Indian crow.
Tail: Two toppings; Jungle, and Kingfisher, one of each on either side.
Butt: Black herl
Body: One-third silver tinsel; over which four Indian Crow, two at top, two at bottom, back to back, sideways; continuing with three or four close turns of black herl. The rest black silk.
Hackle: Black, from silk.
Ribbed: Silver tinsel, and gold lace.
Throat: Green macaw (the feather is from under the wing or tail of the bird).
Wings: Two dark blue macaw feathers (taken from the top of the wing), Jungle on either side extending beyond tag, and five Tippet feathers, as illustrated, reaching to the butt, with three or four golden pheasant toppings over.
Cheeks: Enameled Thrush.
Head: Black herl.

#4 - QUINCHAT

Tag: Silver twist, and purple silk (same shade as throat of blue chatterer).
Tail: Topping Butt: Black herl Body: In five sections, each increasing in length. The first part is red silk, the same shade as the points of the red crow; one of these feathers, it will be observed, is above and below. The remaining four divisions are light blue silk, the same color as the light blue chatterer hackles at the termination of the second and third partition. (These feathers are from the top of the tail.) At the end of the fourth and fifth divisions the hackles are light blue macaw.
Ribbed: Oval tinsel
Throat: Yellow macaw (flank feather).
Wings: Two blue macaw feathers. The feathers which are over them (extended cheeks) are green macaw.
Cheeks: Indian (red) crow.
Two toppings over.
Horns: Red macaw (double).
Head: Black herl.

#5 - TIPPETIWITCHET

Tag: Silver twist, and light blue silk the same colour as a light blue chatterer.
Tail: A topping.
Butt: Black herl.
Body: In five equal divisions, each terminating with a black herl butt. There are four tippets; two (back to back) tied in top and bottom of every section over the golden floss which, silk is the same shade as the golden toppings.
Ribbed: Oval tinsel.
Throat: Blue chatterer feather
Wings: Five or six toppings, according to size of hook Cheeks: Blue chatterer

#6 - THE BLACK PRINCE (see The Salmon Fly)

#7 - THE NEPENTHIAN

Tag: Gold twist and gold silk (same shade as toppings).
Tail: Topping and two red crows
Butt: White ostrich herl, dyed the same colour as dark blue chatterer
Body: In three equal sections. The first light blue silk, same shade as light blue chatterer, with four dark chatterer feathers, back to back, and butted with the same coloured herl as before. The middle division, light orange silk, the same shade as the toucan above and below, and butted similarly. The rest, red orange silk, resembling in tint of the three red crow's feathers situated on either side from under the throat.
Throat: Red macaw
Ribbed: Oval gold tinsel
Wings: Six tippets, back to back, with two jungle projecting.

Cheeks: Summer duck extended, and blue chatterer, two strips golden pheasant tail above, with topping over.
Horns: Red macaw.
Head: Blue herl, as above mentioned.

#8 - THE EMERALD GEM

Tag: Gold twist and purple silk (same shade as throat of chatterer).
Tail: Topping
Butt: Black herl
Body: Of gold tinsel in three equal sections, butted with black herl.
Hackle: Green macaw at the termination of each division.
Wings: Golden toppings.
Horns: Blue macaw.
Head: Black herl.

#9 - THE CHATTERER (see The Salmon Fly)

#10- THE JUNGLE DON

Tag: Silver twist, and silk the same colour as toppings
Tail: Topping
Butt: Black herl
Body: In four sections, butted, and with two jungle feathers back to back, top and bottom. #1 division: Green silk, same shade as the green feather of the macaw. #2: Tippet-coloured silk. #3: Dark blue silk, same tone as an enameled thrush. #4: Black silk.
Ribbed: Oval tinsel.
Wings: Toppings.
Horns: Blue macaw. Head: Black herl.

#11 - THE MAY QUEEN

Tag: Silver twist and silk, same shade as the point of the red crow.
Tail: Topping, two red crow feathers (sideways).
Butt: Black herl.
Body: Blue silk, to end of first turn of ribs, same shade as the macaw hackle, the rest silver tinsel.
Ribbed: Fine oval tinsel.
Hackle: Powdered blue macaw.
Throat: Yellow macaw.
Wings: Two yellow macaw feathers.
Cheeks: Enameled thrush, two toppings over.
Horns: Blue macaw.
Head: Black herl.

#12-THE JAY P.T.

Tag: Silver twist and canary-coloured floss.
Tail: Topping and red crow.
Butt: Black herl.
Body: In four sections, butted. #1: Topping-coloured silk, with four Jay points, two above and below. #2: Tippet-coloured silk, and repeat the Jay's. #3: Red crow coloured silk and Jays. #4: Red claret silk and Jays, as, before.
Ribbed: Fine oval tinsel.
Wings: Toppings.
Horns: Red macaw.
Head: Black herl.

#13 - ROUGE-ET-NOIR

Tag: Silver twist and topping coloured silk.
Tail: Topping.
Butt: Black herl.
Body: In five sections, butted; the first and third, four red crows over and under the same coloured floss

silk; the second and fourth jungle cock, over blue rock coloured silk (the blue rock is the medium coloured chatterer), and the fifth division of red claret silk.
Ribbed: Fine oval tinsel.
Throat: Two jungle top and bottom as before, but placed over two red crow, the points of the latter in advance.
Wings: Toppings.
Horns: Blue macaw.
Head: Black herl.

#14 - THE EVENING STAR

Tag: Silver twist and tippet-coloured silk (tippet written thus always refers to the golden pheasant).
Tail: Topping.
Butt: Black herl.
Body: In four equal sections of silver tinsel, the first three having two jungle above and below, and butted; the last of Blue Rock-coloured silk, and the only one ribbed with silver tinsel.
Throat: Two jungle as before (these feathers slightly increase in length from the opposite end of the body).
Wings: Four Amherst pheasant tippets, back to back.
Cheeks: Summer duck and two red crow, the former in advance; topping over.
Horns: Red macaw.
Head: Black herl.

#15 - THE LAPWING

Tag: Silver twist and green silk (same shade as the green feathers from Macaws).
Tail: Topping.
Butt: Black herl.
Body: In four equal sections, the first three butted with the herl. #1 division, silver tinsel, with canary Toucan above and below. #2, topping coloured floss silk, ribbed with fine oval tinsel, and the ordinary Toucan above and below. #3, orange silk, ribbed likewise, with Red Crow above and below. #4, red claret silk, ribbed again as before.
Throat: Five or six Red Crow and Jay feather.
Wings: Ten enameled thrush.
Cheeks: Summer duck and Jungle Cock, two toppings over.
Horns: Amherst pheasant.
Head: Black herl.

#16 - NELLY BLY

Tag: Silver twist and green silk (the same shade as the green feather of the Macaw).
Tail: Topping.
Butt: Black herl.
Body: In four equal divisions of floss silk: #1, the same colour as the two feathers of the red Crow, which are above and below, and butted with black herl, as also is each of the rest. #2, the silk is the same blue as the four Jays. The best idea I can offer of #3 is that the silk is the same in tone as that of a green parrot, and a few shades darker than the tag; and #4 of magenta silk, each having four jungle cock.
Ribbed: Flat silver tinsel.
Wings: Two red orange Macaw feathers, with one Jay feather on either side, which are from the overgrowth, having blue on both sides of the shaft; two golden toppings above.
Horns: Blue macaw.
Head: Black herl.

#17 - EVANGELINE

Tag: Silver twist and golden topping coloured silk.
Tail: Topping.
Butt: Black herl.
Body: In four equal divisions - the first two of silver tinsel, butted as before, with two blue chatterer feathers (in each) top and bottom; the third and fourth, floss silk and butted, the former being the colour of the "tips" of the four red crow's feathers, the other red claret silk, the crows being repeated. Both of these sections are:

Ribbed: Silver tinsel.
Throat: Two jay's - one on either side.
Wings: Two yellow feathers from the blue macaw. Cheeks: Summer duck, with golden topping over.
Horns: Red macaw.
Head: Black herl.

#18 - LANG SYNE

Tag: Silver twist, and golden topping coloured silk.
Tail: A topping, and two red crow.
Butt: Black herl.
Body: In four equal sections - the first two of orange floss silk the same shade as the tippets, with two jay points top and bottom in each, and butted as before; the other two of red claret silk, with jungle fowl instead of jay, and butted.
Ribbed: Silver tinsel.
Wings: Four Amherst pheasant tippets dyed a bright green.
Cheeks: Two golden tippets extended, summer duck, and blue chatterer. olden topping over.
Horns: Blue macaw.
Head: Black herl.

Despite Traherne's beautifully inventive patterns, the accomplished and experienced Traherne had felt that "size has more to do with success than all the patterns of flies ever invented." As an aside Traherne preferred using two single loops of untwisted gut (as did O'Fee) rather than using twisted gut for the eye. He also preferred using materials that were not dyed.

CONTINUING KELSON INFORMATION

By John Pike

This past summer I had the occasion to speak with one of our members, David Zincavage, about the pattern dressings published by Kelson. David has done extensive research on Kelson a may be able to offer a source of information few of us will ever have available. I quote from a letter David sent:

"I am working on a book on Salmon Flies and have gone over the Kelson ground quite extensively. I think it is possible that I may have a more complete list than you are drawing on for your Fall issue, and perhaps I can be of assistance with some additional patterns, or by supplying information about some patterns' inventors and histories."

I believe that David has found one of the main points we are trying to accomplish with this newsletter, the sharing of information not common to all members. I look forward to hearing more from David, and others like him, who wish to bring their historical research to our attention. I hope that such submissions expand the usefulness of these pages into a ready reference for tiers and collectors alike. As a sample, David sent the following dressing:

THE EDITOR

Tip: Silver Twist.
Tag: Light yellow floss silk.
Tail: Toucan, gallina, and powdered blue macaw.
Butt: Black herl.
Body: Dark yellow floss (to first turn of tinsel); equal divisions: crimson, majenta, blue, dark claret, and black seal's fur.
Ribbing: Silver tinsel.
Hackle: Dark yellow and very light blue (together) from the seal's fur.
Throat: Jay.
Wings: Mixed in single fibres: powdered blue macaw, teal, bustard, golden pheasant tail, and peacock; swan, dyed olive, yellow, and crimson; two strips (over) brown mottled turkey with white tips; topping over.
Horns: Blue macaw.
Sides: Chatterer.
Head: Black herl.
Inventor: Geo. M. Kelson

Source: FISHING GAZETTE, Vol. VII, 11/17/1883, p. 565.

Comment: May be dressed light and fine for Ireland; large and well picked out for Scotland; small heavy wings, but flat, for Wales. -GMK

This is the first salmon fly pattern published by Kelson in FISHING GAZETTE. It was invented as a means of flattering its editor, Robert Bright Marston, who was, years later, by his criticism to permanently diminish Kelson's reputation. The gesture succeeded and Kelson was hired by the Gazette to provide "illustrated descriptions of the various ways of casting a salmon fly [and] the dressings of some new salmon and grilse flies."

REFLECTIONS ON THE ODYSSEY OF A SALMON FLY DRESSER

By Mike Radencich

How was I to know on that fateful day over a year ago when I first cracked open Jorgenson's book on The Salmon Fly, etc., etc. that I would be where I find myself today, a quivering was of sobbing flesh wondering where I am going to come up with enough money to buy "...just a few more feathers of (you name it) that I can't dress another fly without!" (I already have 150 of the same feathers neatly tucked away in my custom-made fly tying bench made specifically for - you guessed it - Salmon Flies!)

Yeah, well, it's easy for you to say "This, too, shall pass." As you're sitting there with the very feathers that I have been begging you to sell me for going on to twenty-four hours, or so. "But if I sold some to you", you counter, "then where would I get more to replace those precious creations plucked from our beaked and winged pals?" (Where you got them in the first place, you @#$&*.)

Ah, well, such are what great Odysseys are made of. It soon became apparent that there are a few rules in the pursuit of this passion (hobby, obsession, interest or whatever) that I became aware of in my meanderings through the wonderful world of Salmonflyland. To wit:

1. Be resourceful - that is spend 7 out of 8 hours at the office making long-distance phone calls to England, Scotland, Argentina, Lower Slobbovia and, oh-yes, the local fly shop inquiring as to "Where I might find a few feathers of the now extinct Pied-Bald Red Breasted Cow Creeper?", instead of being productive and helping your boss make oodles of money of which you will never get a cent of.

2. Take lessons for someone who knows what they're doing and have already spent twenty-five years learning from every book in existence, from 1654 to 1990 (after all, why should I spend all that time poring over ancient tomes, when all I want to do is become the greatest Salmon Fly dresser that ever hit the local conclave. In the shortest time possible. After having tied my first two Salmon patterns, which I know are the greatest contribution to the art that anyone has ever laid eye upon).

3. Never, I mean NEVER, put a single $400.00 feather on a "machine made" hook. Especially any made by that certain company in Britain, whose name I shall not divulge. (Now I know that the wonderful people in England, who produce this very piece of iron, of which I speak, are ready to sue my face from here to kingdom come; if not to send the British armada to Kansas City, by way of the Missouri River, to haul me back to those great Isles. It's just that, well, the hooks don't quite have the right BEND - you know what I mean?)

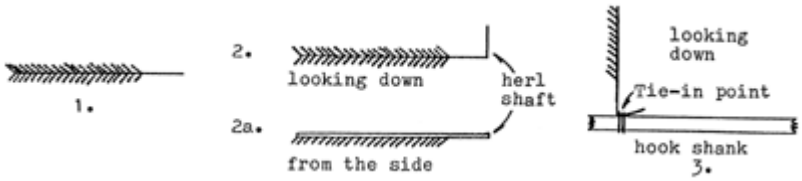
4. Under no circumstance should you ever ask a fellow Salmon Fly tier to sell you some of their feathers, under pain of slow torture. (i.e.: What??? It took me 43 years to ten of these feathers. AND YOU WANT ME TO SELL YOU EIGHT OF THEM???) Oh well, back to the drawing board.

Anyway, I've learned a few things about this wonderful interest that has slowly, but surely, sucked me ever farther into the black hole of obsessive/compulsive Salmon Fly dressing. I want to share a few of those thoughts with you (although everyone of you will say to yourself "Oh, hell, I knew how to do that 67 years ago!). Well, I didn't know it!

Restoring golden Pheasant Tails - Yes, you've been there; trying to marry those blasted G.P. tail strips. This can be an exercise in "Why am I putting myself through this pain?" I learned this tip from a shop owner out East. Mix up a strong batch of WOOLITE solution - 2 or 3 capfuls of WOOLITE to a large pan of water. Place your tail - ahem, that is to say your Golden Pheasant tail into the solution and swish it around a bit. Let the feather soak for a minimum (not to be confused with a small English mother) or 24

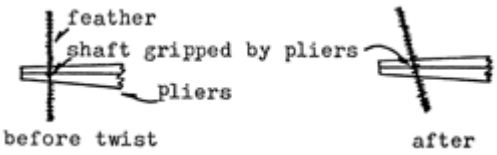
hours; 48 hours would probably be better. During this whole process DO NOT TOUCH any of the barbs, so as not to crush or damage the barbules, that hold the barbs together, when "married". After this soaking period, rinse the feather carefully under cold water, again not touching the barbs. Air dry the feather, do not blot the excess water from the fibers; let it dry of its own. Once dry, steam the feather back to it's original shape. You should find that the fibers will now marry better to other feathers. If it doesn't, don't come crying to me.

PSST! Wanna know the way to tie the most perfect ostrich herl butt this side of the River Tweed? I learned this trick from the fine Massachusetts dresser Ron Alcott, who in turn learned it from the great Scottish salmon fly dresser Megan Boyd:



Strip off the little barbules from about 3/8" of the end of the herl strip (drawing #1). Note that the barbules slant a from the stripped end. Then (drawing #2) bend the shaft with your tweezers at right angles, leaving an empty space equal to the circumference of the hook between the bend and the barbules (yeah, I know what you're thinking, "Now, how the heck am I supposed to know what the circumference of a salmon hook is?" Well, do what I do - Guess!) Anyway, make sure that when you make your crimp, the shaft of the herl should be above and the barbules falling below with the bend made a from you (Dig? drawing #2a). Now, tie in the herl on the far side of the hook (drawing #3 - looking down on top of the hook shank) with enough turns of thread (tight and together) to the right, to define the actual width of the butt. When you begin wrapping the butt, the barbules must point to the rear of the hook, or it won't work. Wrap the herl four or five turns and tie off. Viola! A perfect herl butt.

Tip #3 - Ever notice that when you tie in a pair of tippet feathers for a whole-feather wing the top edges tend to flare away from each other? Well, I personally would rather have the edge meet. So, what I do is first mash the shaft of each feather at the tie-in point with my pliers. Then, while the shaft is still in the jaws of my pliers I take the feather in my other hand and twist it towards the inside a bit (see drawing below).



You'll have to twist a couple of times to get the feather to stay twisted. Do the same with the other feather, only twist it the opposite sway (as you might expect). Thus, when the feathers are tied in together and inward-tilting top edges will force each other upright and you end up with a nice, vertical pair of wings with the edges together. By the way, I find it much easier to tie down the paired wings with a "soft-loop". I hold the feather pair on top of the hook in position with my left hand. Then with the bobbin I bring a loose loop of thread around the hook and let this loop gently fall on top of the tie-in point of the feather shafts and carefully tighten it down. This keeps the feathers from moving all over the place when tying-in.

Well, I think I've over stayed my welcome, so I'm outta here! Oh, by the way, you know those 10 Golden-eyed Flaming Fuzz-winged Eagle feathers you bought the other day at considerable expense and 12 years of searching for? Well, I've got some money in my pocket, here, and if you could just sell me eight of them...

ON POLISHING TINSEL

By John Pike

Last issue there were some notes concerning how to polish tinsel. Alec Jackson recently continued this discussion:

"As a child - more than 50 years ago - I remember using BRASSO to polish the family brass (fire irons, candle sticks, horse brasses and the like). It was a never ending task which was performed on a regular schedule and much too frequently for a boy who would rather have been doing something else.

Then my mother found a product which claimed 'apply this and you will never have to polish your brass again', so similar words. It worked! Last year, 1989, I went home to put my mother to rest and on returning brought with me a number of those brasses, still as bright as they were when last polished prior to World War II (1939). For fifty years a product, which I have long forgotten the name of, worked as claimed. Does Dave, or anyone else know the name of that product? Seems like us fly dressers could use in today!"

With those few words Alec had created another mystery. Fifty years, and some distance removed, the possibility of finding the same polish in 1990 seemed remote. The search was joined by research from Consumer Reports, the local library, several fly tiers, the shops they trade at, the wives of the shop owners, and two engravers. No one had a clue as to what the product might have been. That brings us to my wife's grandmother.

In passing, my search was mentioned to the dear lady. She couldn't be certain this was the same product, but she was still using what her mother had used; and she said she didn't need to use it very often. The bottle she had was purchased in 1962 (that was the new one). I obtained the product name, and company address, with little hope that it would still be around in these days of carcinogens and plastics. Could be I was wrong. There on my grocers shelf sat the same product, freshly packaged in a plastic container. Since the last week of July the tinsel polished with this cleaner has been exposed to Mother Nature, house cats, handling by small children and moisture. Though not a long term assessment, wiping with a soft cloth restores the original polish luster. The same company also makes a silver polish of similar quality (according to my wife). Since 1873, the name has been WRIGHT'S BRASS POLISH, from J. A. Wright & Co., P.O. Box 566, Keene, N.H. 03431. I used BRASSO in the service, and believe me, this stuff isn't even similar. Gently wipe it on, gently wipe it off, instant polish. It might even work on that old spittoon sitting by the fireplace.

TIPS ON WRITING AN ARTICLE FOR THE SALMON FLYER

By Tom Broderidge

"I can't tie salmon flies as well as some members of The Group. What can I write that they don't already know?"

"I'm not a professional writer. How can I produce a manuscript for publication?"

If your reaction to having to write an article for this newsletter is anything like either of those, then this article should help get you started.

First of all, the premise behind asking each member to submit an article is that everyone in The Group has useful information to share. That can be how-to tying instruction, or essays on salmon fly history, or collecting, or even a report on attempts and failures to solve a fly tying problem. Your salmon fly interests and activities are what we want you to write about.

The next question is the ability to communicate. Someone once said that reading is just thinking with notes. Writing is the corollary: just thinking and making notes. I met many members of The Group at Eugene, Oregon this summer, and everyone I spoke with easily expressed themselves well enough to be able to jot down their thoughts on paper and create a readable article.

One of the things a writer should do before beginning is identify who the audience is. Writing for The Group makes that easy. You will be addressing a very small, specialized group of people who are quite well informed about both salmon flies and fly tying techniques. That means you don't have to explain things like who Pryce-Tannatt is, or what a limerick hook looks like, or what "marrying" feathers means. Without spending much space on introductory material, you can get right to the new information.

You should also begin with a reasonable idea of both the amount of material you plan to cover and the degree of detail you plan to provide. The best way to do this is by making an outline. It doesn't have to be formally structured, complete with Roman numerals and indentations, but can simply be a list of your topics. Nay outline for this article, for example, was as brief as this:

introduction -- questions & answers
prerequisites -- audience, organization
the lead -- example

clarity -- repetition, pronouns revisions
guidelines

Writers tend to spend a disproportionate amount of time on the very beginning, or lead, of their articles on the theory that if the few first words don't capture the reader's attention, the rest of the words won't be read at all.

One technique for deciding what to say in you lead is to imagine you are seated a long dinner table with the very people you are writing to. You have something interesting to tell them, but first you have to get their attention. You clear your throat because you will have to speak in a voice slightly louder than normal, and you say something like . . .

"Throw away your gloves and hand cream, everybody, I discovered absolutely the best way to handle silk floss!"

If you can imagine all head turning toward you, all conversation stopping, and everyone waiting to hear what you are going to say next, then you have a good lead.

Once you have got them listening - or in your case reading - continue giving your information as you listed it in your outline. Say exactly what you mean and say it directly, as though you were writing a letter to a friend. In fact, one national magazine says that when a book review is submitted along with an accompanying letter, the review itself is invariable stiff and formal while the letter explaining the review is bright and vibrant. The magazine discards the review and prints the letter.

Your article will be more readable if you write in short sentences and use the simplest words that convey your meaning. This is expository writing, not fiction; prose not poetry. The object here is not to be "literary," but to get information across as clearly as possible.

For example, don't worry about the verbal inelegance of repeating words if that makes the meaning clearer:

"Double the thread over your finger. Take two turns counterclockwise on the hook shank while still holding the loop." . . . is not as good a descriptive passage as . . .

"Double the thread over your finger. Take two turns of the thread counterclockwise on the hook shank while still holding the tying thread loop with your finger."

The overuse of pronouns can also result in imprecise writing, as in:

"Place the feathers in the trays and mark them with a magic marker."

Do we mark the feathers, or the trays? Better is: "Place the feathers in the trays and mark the feathers with a magic marker."

Go on to complete your article, saying what you want to say in the clearest manner possible. Check spelling and grammar. Then put your completed article away and don't even think about it for 24 hours. Take it out and look at it again. Make any changes you feel are necessary. Then - and this is important - mail it.

Remember, no piece of writing has ever been perfect. Yours won't be either. Although editors can do amazing things with manuscripts that are in their hands, they can't do anything with the ones that are sitting on your desk waiting to become masterpieces.

The Group is eager to learn from you. So start writing!

The Salmon Flyer
Vol. 3 - No.1, Winter, 1991

MAJOR JOHN POPKIN TRAHERNE (1826-1901)

by J. David Zincavage

"Of all the fish that fall victims to our skill, salmon are the most interesting by reason of their size, strength, and gameness, the difficulty of their capture, and the romantic scenery of the districts in which, during their periodic returns to fresh water, we have to seek them."

-Major John P. Traherne (1)

"Major Traherne is the master of infinite elaboration (2). There are no salmon flies in creation requiring so much patient work to dress well as Major Traherne's." (3)

-George Kelson

George Kelson began his continuing series "On the Description of Salmon Flies" in the Spring of 1884 in THE FISHING GAZETTE; the first eighteen patterns he discussed were flies invented by Major John P. Traherne. Kelson tells us that he had not intended to proceed to publish salmon fly patterns until he had fulfilled his promise to the public by bringing out "Standard Colours" of material that would permit everyone to dress their flies precisely in accordance with Kelson's prescriptions.

Kelson's promise to provide "Standard Colours" commercially was never to be fulfilled as originally stated. In reality, Kelson's knowledge of dyeing was that of a contemporary of Jones and Blacker, that of an era forty years gone. Chemistry and the technology of dyes had advanced rapidly in the second half of the 19th Century, and Kelson found himself unable to compete on the same ground with normal commercial dyers of the 1880's. In the end, in the Spring of 1886 after he had left THE FISHING GAZETTE to become editor at LAND & WATER, Kelson took advantage of the latter publication's tradition of supplemental illustration, and produced a series of chromolithographed card illustrating salmon flies, which the public was informed were to be taken as the fulfillment of Kelson's long-standing promise to provide "STANDARD COLOURS".

In the opening paragraph of the first article "On the Description of Salmon Flies", Kelson tells us he has decided to proceed with these articles, even in the absence of the "Standard Colours", as it is possible to discuss Major Traherne's flies which characteristically are tied using only natural material.

Kelson's decision to commence his lengthy series of essays on the salmon

fly with Traherne's patterns was clearly based not only on that consideration. Undoubtedly, George Kelson found it fitting to begin with Traherne's patterns because their complexity of design and artistic excellence would make the powerful impression on the GAZETTE's readership that he desired. These eighteen patterns would dazzle his readers, as they had the salmon in the Shannon and the Tay.

Kelson could appreciate the impact these patterns would have upon the angling public, as he was himself still under their spell. At the Berlin exhibition of 1880 Kelson was alone in exhibiting a case of twenty salmon flies tied by himself. He displayed the same case of twenty flies at the Great International Fisheries Exhibition at London in 1883. It was his dissent as one of twelve jurors with the disposition of awards at this Exhibition that led to Kelson's friendship with Robert Marston, editor of THE FISHING GAZETTE; and, after Kelson's judicious cultivation of Marston, to Kelson's various series of articles in THE GAZETTE.

At London, Kelson's case of salmon flies was not alone. Several of the tackle houses and commercial tyers exhibited salmon flies as part of their various wares, and also another amateur exhibited "a case of. salmon flies." The other amateur fly dresser was, of course, Major Traherne, and the natural suspicion is that the contents of the case he exhibited were the same eighteen patterns, which Kelson published in THE GAZETTE in 1884 and 1885.

It seems probable that Kelson and Traherne met and formed a friendship, at the London Exhibition in 1883. It is possible to imagine that they might have encountered one another previously on the Welsh

River Usk, which was not far from Traherne's home in Glamorganshire, and with which Kelson is much associated. A series of patterns for the River Usk constitutes a prominent portion of George Kelson's own creative legacy in salmon fly dressing. The frequency of gestures of civility towards each other, however, directly following the International Fisheries Exhibition, is significant and indicates that their relationship was at that time in its formative stage.

The two men could not have been more unalike. Born in Kent, just outside of London (practically a Cockney), the son of a surgeon, a self-made man who had made his fortune as a London merchant, Kelson was a pushing, thrusting, get ahead sort of fellow. Every detail of his life manifests the insecurity of the nouveau riche. A fiery, redheaded gamecock, a ruthless self-promoter and boundless egotist, Kelson made enemies and stirred up controversy everywhere. His ever-present bowler hat (proudly worn, no doubt, to bring to mind his achievements on the cricket field) infallibly marked him as a member of the mercantile/clerical class (gentlemen wore toppers). Kelson fell as far short in his morals as his manners from the Victorian ideal of the English Gentleman, as Surtees's grocer of Great Coram Street, John Jorrocks, M.F.H.

Major Traherne, nine years Kelson's senior, was born a member of the landed gentry. His family was armigerous, tracing its descent from an eponymous Welsh Prince who ruled Gwynedd in the Eleventh Century. For two hundred years before his birth his ancestors had been landowners and office holders. His grandfather had made a particularly advantageous marriage to one Frances Popkin, an heiress, who brought into his family her surname as well as the estate at Coytrahen. John Popkin Traherne was born August 28, 1826. He was the eldest son, and. therefore heir to the estate, which came to him in 1859. In 1845, he obtained a commission as Ensign in 39th (Dorset) Regiment of Foot. He served with that regiment for nearly six years, and resigned by sale of his commission in 1851. He served, subsequently, as Major in the Glamorganshire Militia, retiring in 1865. As might be expected, Traherne occupied the sorts of County offices reserved for those principal landowners who were not of the peerage: Justice of the Peace, Deputy Lieutenant for the County, and finally High Sheriff in 1863.

In contrast to the fiery Kelson, Traherne was not only a gentleman by birth, but also a genuinely gentle and kindly man. He alone of all the angling celebrities of his era was able to remain friends with the quarrelsome and contumacious Kelson right up to the time of his own death in 1901. In the photographs of Traherne that have come down to us, in Kelson's book, and in THE FISHING GAZETTE, he looks out at us, past his muttonchop whiskers, the very picture of the decent, stalwart, phlegmatic, and reliable British gentleman of the old school - Dr. Watson, to the life! And, in his relationship with the volatile Kelson, Traherne's role was clearly that of the faithful Watson ministering to the all-consuming ego of the ebullient Holmes. Kelson's sins were many and scarlet, and when he was well and truly taken through the mill by Marston in the famous "Little Inky Boy" controversy of 1907-8, the reader could not but feel that he had it all coming to him. Still one's heart goes out to poor Kelson when he writes in extremis, replying to Marston's latest and only too telling attack, that if only Major Traherne were still alive to defend him . . .

Had Traherne still been alive in 1908, it is likely he would have intervened to still the furor Kelsonicus, and would probably have succeeded since both his moral character and his tremendous knowledge and experience of salmon fishing commanded the respect of both combatants.

In 1886, in THE FISHING GAZETTE, Marston wrote a profile of Traherne's angling career, informed obviously by Traherne himself. He caught his first salmon in 1850, and from then until the time of his death fished, throughout the long British season, most rivers in the United Kingdom. Traherne either himself held a lease on, or fished regularly as a guest, the following rivers: in Scotland, the Naver, Thurso, Helmsdale, the Aberdeenshire Dee, Spey, Cuve, Annan, and the Kirkcudbrightshire Dee; in Wales, the Conway, Usk, and Wye; in Ireland, the Moy, the Galway Ballinahinch, Boyne, Shannon, Carah (Kerry), Laune, Lee, Suir, and the Blackwater (Cork). He had fished all of these, each for "several years in succession", by 1886. In addition, we are informed, Major Traherne leased several unspecified rivers in Norway for seven years. One of these was the legendary Namsen.

After 1886, the River Reports in THE FISHING GAZETTE indicate that Traherne continued his lease for some years on the Stanley water on the Tay, and fished the Boyne and the Lee regularly. His principal salmon fishing focus in the last twenty years of his life, however, was certainly the three-mile stretch of water that he leased at Killaloe on the River Shannon. It is depressing to contemplate the fact that it is no longer possible to fish Major Traherne's water, which was submerged beneath a hydroelectric project by the Irish Government in the Twentieth Century.

The Shannon possessed the peculiar characteristic that apparently no fly could be dressed too brightly for its salmon. In fact, the brighter the fly, the better it worked. The accumulated historical evidence is that the elaborate "gaudy" style of salmon fly dressing originated in the West of Ireland, and most particularly around the Shannon. As the premier Irish salmon fishery, its environs had long been a center of angling commercial enterprise and export. The world famous O'Shaughnessy hook, preferred above all others for salmon fly dressing, came from a Limerick maker.

Through the Nineteenth Century, the "gaudy" salmon fly supplanted in fashion and use the drab local favorites on river after river. Younger tells us the development occurred early, circa 1830-40, on the Tweed, which rapidly itself became the leading site of salmon fly invention. On lesser, more provincial rivers, the process took place later. Taverner quotes John Waller Hills's account of the changeover on the Eden as late as the 1890's. As "gaudy" flies became popular on every river, Shannon flies grew more gaudy still (cf. Ephemera's "Three Graces", circa 1850).

Major Traherne's patterns represent the pinnacle of achievement in the Victorian Era of the Shannon style of salmon fly dressing, and it was his role to act as the vehicle of transmission to angling posterity of the Shannon school of fly dressing: through Kelson's articles on his patterns and Kelson's emulation of his style in salmon fly design. When today the most talented and creative salmon fly dressers, individuals like Paul Schmookler and Ken Sawada, invent "exhibition" or "artistic" patterns utilizing the rarest and most valuable of materials and requiring the greatest command of tying technique, the Shannon tradition lives on.

Only slightly less gaudy flies were the standard on the Erne, where Michael Rogan achieved worldwide fame as a salmon fly dresser by the middle of the century. Rogan may well have been an influence on Traherne as he, too, was famous for avoiding dyed material. Evidently, the peat-stained highly acid waters of the Erne bleached out the dyes of the period. The Erne was Ireland's second finest fishery, and, sad to say, it too has been completely eliminated by a hydroelectric scheme. The angler cannot but marvel that Ireland chose to destroy both of her finest salmon rivers.

Despite his love of the Shannon, Traherne seems to have departed from the usual local practice of "harling". Long, top-heavy actioned Castle Connell rods, made by John Enright right next door, were employed to impart action to flies towed to and fro across the river in peculiar high-ended boats, called "cots", which somewhat resembled Venetian gondolas. Traherne preferred less passive forms of salmon fishing, and employed a three-sectioned greenheart rod with a more even action, better suited to long casts and spey casts. He lent his favorite rod to Farlow's so that they could duplicate its action for a "Traherne" model to be offered to the public at large.

Traherne's taste in salmon rods was worth heeding, for at THE FISHING GAZETTE Tournament in 1884, Traherne found himself, as one of the publication's favorite "experts", called upon to perform. Under weather conditions that Marston described at the time as "remarkably adverse", Major Traherne calmly proceeded to make what was for years the world's record cast of 45 yards and one inch. He used a spliced Farlow-made "Traherne" rod of 17 feet four inches. The cast was made July 26, 1884. How many of us today, I wonder, could equal that distance?

Traherne also held some of the records for fish catches, recorded without guilt back in that more generous age. On the Namsen, in August of 1864, Traherne caught 165 fish in fifteen days. On the best of those fifteen days, he caught 23 fish, 12 grilse and 11 salmon, the largest weighing 38 lbs. Writing in 1886, Kelson believe Traherne's Namsen score had never been equaled. Fishing from March 10 to March 25, 1885, on the Boyne, Major Traherne caught fish weighing 33, 28, 24, 22, 17, 18, 19, 19, 27, 19, 19, 26, and 33 lbs. The total weight was 304 lbs, an enviable average of almost 23 1/2 lbs. per fish.

Regrettably, Major Traherne did not devote himself to the writing of articles for the Sporting papers, as Kelson did. He did contribute frequently to the controversies that were ongoing in the letter column of THE FISHING GAZETTE. THE FISHING GAZETTE, the contemporary reader must be informed, had an editorial policy regarding letters from its readers, differing quite notably from any periodical we are familiar with today. The GAZETTE encouraged lengthy debate in its letter column, and on topics that called forth strong feelings on the part of its readership, the battle could rage for a year or two, issue after issue. Traherne participated in many of the principal symposia of the '70's, '80's, and '90's. He played a particularly prominent role in the debate as to whether the parr is, in fact, a salmon (in the 1870's many were convinced it was a separate fish: Traherne was proved to be right), and the debate on the practice "of striking from the reel" (i.e. setting the hook on a taking salmon while not touching one's reel, thus allowing the drag to apply sufficient, but not too much force, in hooking the fish).

His only book, "The Habits of the Salmon", published in 1889 was a study of the natural history of the salmon, and the was a valuable contribution to the understanding of Traherne's contemporaries, its conclusions were mostly accepted universally so long ago, that the reader today will probably not be very interested. It is interesting that Traherne believed salmon did feed in fresh water, and disgorged their stomach contents upon being hooked. He is presumably the source of that theory.

Of more interest to the contemporary student of salmon fishing and the salmon fly is his essay on "Salmon Fishing with the Fly", he contributed to Henry Chomondeley Pennell's "Salmon and Trout" volume of "Fishing", published in the Badminton Library series in 1886. It is typical of Traherne's modesty that he delegated the selection of salmon fly patterns at conclusion of his essay to his friend, George Kelson. Traherne's observations on technique and fly selection are still pertinent to today's readers. It is particularly interesting to find that though Traherne believed the color of the fly and its size influenced the angler's success, he believed that more or less any pattern of the same color would produce the same result. Traherne did not subscribe to Kelson's pseudo-scientific theories that posited a guaranteed result from the use of a specific fly pattern under specific circumstances.

He clearly tied his complex and elaborate patterns simply for the pleasure of exercising the technique that he loved and at which he so excelled. He wrote: "Fly tying is a most interesting, and I might almost say exciting occupation, and many a dull rainy day, during the winter months especially, may be thus pleasantly, and as far as salmon fishing matters are concerned profitably, passed. Doubtless a man will feel much prouder when he has landed a fish with a fly of his own making, than one he has bought, and I would recommend every fisherman who has the time to try his hand at it." (4)

But the Major did not dogmatically insist that tying one's own salmon flies was for everyone: "I have heard it said that a man cannot rank as a first class fisherman unless he can do so; but I think this is hardly fair. Many people's fingers are 'all thumbs', and they could not tie a fly in a year of Sundays, as the saying goes; other salmon fishermen are professional men with no time to spare from their duties... It might just as soon be said that to rank in the first class a fisherman should be able to make his own rods and reels." (5)

It is also interesting to find that Traherne, despite his own remarkable accomplishments in pattern invention, writes: "With regard to patterns of flies, my favorite is the Jock Scott, and if I were told that I was only allowed to fish with one pattern that is the one I should choose." (6)

Major Traherne died Monday, January 28, 1901, from a stroke. He survived Queen Victoria by only six days. In the obituary in FISHING GAZETTE, Marston wrote: "With the death of Major John P. Traherne has passed away one of the best of salmon anglers and most genial of men... his death has cast quite a gloom over Killaloe and Shannon salmon anglers, for during the many years he had visited the district he was as Mr. Hurley puts it, 'simply idolized and loved by every one.'" Marston remembered Traherne carefully hand-tailing a kelt Marston caught on his first salmon fishing trip, on the Dee at Banchory in 1884, so that it could be released: "He hated the idea of using the gaff on a kelt". (7) It was typical of Traherne's sportsmanship, at a time when most anglers simply slaughtered kelts indiscriminately.

Of the eighteen patterns published in THE FISHING GAZETTE previously, Kelson gave the dressings of only three in his 1896 book, "The Salmon Fly". These were: BLUEBELL, TIPPETIWICHET, renamed GOLDEN BUTTERFLY, and CHATTERER. Also, dressings were given for two patterns which had originally appeared in LAND & WATER: BLUE BOYNE and FRA DIAVOLO. The illustrations to "The Salmon Fly" depict on Plate 6 a pattern, TRAHERNE'S WONDER, the dressing for which seems never to have been published. Nonetheless, the dressing has been determined from the illustration, and a tied example is illustrated in Bates's second book. One additional pattern by Traherne was published by Kelson in LAND & WATER, but not included in his book. The dressing appeared in book form only in Major Fisher's little known title, "Rod and River", misattributed to Kelson. On the theory no article should appear without a fly pattern, this pattern, PHOEBUS, is given below. Thus far, therefore, 22 patterns of Traherne's invention are known to exist. It is to be hoped that future research will find at least a few more.

NAME: Phoebus

Tip: Silver twist.
Tag: Blue silk.
Tail: Two toppings and a chatterer feather.
Butt: Black ostrich.

Body: Four sections: flat gold tinsel, each butted with black ostrich herl, and veiled with two or three yellow toucan beneath an Indian Crow feather; the toucan feathers should be longer than the Indian Crow, except at the frontmost where they should be the same; these veilings should graduate in length from tail to head; the veilings are put on perpendicular to the hook, as in the POPHAM.
Wings: Two large green macaw feathers, back to back, and two toppings over all.
Horns: Blue macaw.
Sides: Two longish barred summer duck feathers, which should extend approximately half the length of the Macaw; Chatterer cheeks.
Head: Black ostrich.

Inventor: Major John P. Traherne

Source: Kelson in LAND & WATER, Vol. 41, No. 1066, 6/23/1886, P. 590. This pattern is also given in Major Fisher's "Rod and River", 1892. Fisher erroneously attributes it to Kelson.

Comment: "The prominent feature of its comeliness and undeniable symmetry, to the eye of an angler, is the deadly facility with which these wing feathers are endowed in very rough and rapid water, or on particularly windy days. The pattern is evidently intended for such water in very deep pools when it is as bright as gin, and the fine fibres on the body, showing to their best advantage, play prettily on either side of the wing." -GMK.

1. Major John P. Traherne, "THE HABITS OF THE SALMON", Chapman and Hall Limited, London, 1889, p. iii.
2. George M. Kelson in LAND & WATER, Volume 41, 5/1/1886, p. 406.
3. George M. Kelson in THE FISHING GAZETTE, Volume 8, 5/31/1884, p. 254.
4. Major John P. Traherne, "Salmon Fishing With the Fly" in "FISHING", edited by Henry Chomondeley-Pennell, in the Badminton Library, Longmans, Green, and Co., London, 1886, p. 204.
5. Ibid.
6. Ibid., p. 205.
7. FISHING GAZETTE, Vol. 42, 2/9/1901, p. 92-3.

PHOTOGRAPHING YOUR FLIES

Another Approach

By Mike Radencich

I'm sure there are many ways of photographing salmon flies that you have encountered and to find another article about just such a subject in this newsletter (where you were more likely to expect one on TIE most foolproof way of setting a wing consisting of 214 individual fibers) might seem a bet tedious; well, bear with me!

Before I launch into a discussion about an alternate way of taking photos of your flies I think it might be a good idea to put forth some basics about light, it's qualities and how these qualities can affect the outcome of your photos. The three most basic form of light are:

1. Point-source Light. This is light that originates from a single, concentrated source which, by it's very nature produces hard-edged shadows. The sun, a bare light bulb, a candle flame are examples of point-source light. The type of light produces bright, "specular" highlights on surfaces such as the "sun-dappling" on water, or the points of light on a wine glass from an overhead light bulb.

2. Broad-source light. Any large, extended source of light will produce soft, muted shadows. Shining a point-source light through a large piece of translucent material will spread the light over a large area softening it and producing soft, indistinct shadows. Light shining through a window away from the sun, the sun shining through a thick cloud deck (where you do not see the sun's disk) or a large bank of fluorescent lights such as a "light ceiling" in a kitchen are other broad-source lights. This light produces much large and muted highlights on surfaces without the bright spots typical of point-source light.

3. Reflected light. As the term implies; light that reflects off a surface from any source of light produces a soft light similar to broad source light. Reflected light may produce no discernible highlights at all, unless the reflecting source is small. Reflected light does, however, produce an overall lightening of the shadow side of the subject. This fact is important in manipulating the lighting contrast on a subject.

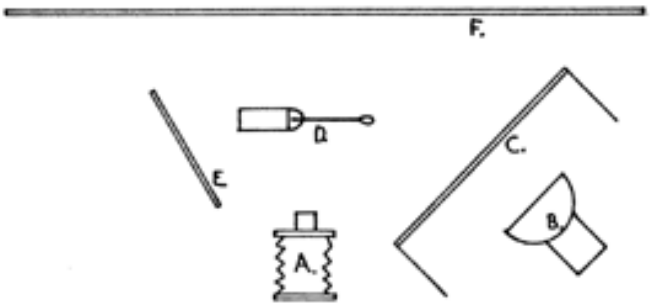
This long-winded description may seem somewhat unnecessary but the understanding of light is crucial to being able to control it for photography.

In my own work as an advertising photographer I almost always use a broad source light for working with inanimate and animate subjects (i.e., people!). The broad-source light mimics "north light" from a window away from the sun. The great painters of old use "north light" as a lighting source for their portraits; Reubens, Michelangelo, DaVinci, etc. all knew the beautiful qualities of soft, indirect lighting a opposed to the harsher light of direct sun.

Generally, I place my broad-source light (which consists of a four-foot by four-foot piece of translucent plexiglas enclosed in a box behind which are a number of strobe lights that, when shined through the plexi, produces a soft "north light") behind and above the subject (from the camera's viewpoint) or to the side. I will then place a white card in front (for the "top back"light) or to the opposite side (for side-light) to "open up" the shadow areas. I try not to place the card too close, though so as not to flatten out the subject; i.e., make the value of the source light too close together.

Well, at this point you might ask (and rightfully so) "What does all this have to do with photographing salmon flies?"

With this groundwork laid out for you I can now describe what I think is a good way to set up the lighting for your flies. Here is a diagram of my particular lighting and subject setup to photograph my flies (looking down):



Where:
A. Camera
B. Light source
C. Diffusion material
D. Fly in vise
E. Reflector card
F. Background (more on this later)

As you can see, I place my light to the side and in this case slightly to the side and in this case slightly to the front to help illuminate the fly better. The card on the left reflects light back onto the fly and helps put a little “sparkle” into the topping of the tail. Note: the reflector can be just a white card or you can spray-mount some aluminum foil onto it to give a "hotter" reflectance.

For background I use a piece of commercially available material that has a light-to-dark gradation (gray to white) to provide more than just a black background. I always let the dark start at the top to gradate to light at the bottom so that the topping of the wing stands out better. Of course, you can use whatever you want for the background to make your photos distinctive from others.

For the light diffuser you can use (as I do) translucent (milk-white) plexiglass from your local plastics supplier. It is a good idea to put a box around the plexi or at least tape cards onto the sides to prevent light from "spilling over" from the main source. My light diffuser measures four-feet by four feet but is this size only because it is used in my normal photography - you do not need to construct one this big. I would still go no smaller that two-feet by two-feet for the diffuser. As for the size of the reflector there is no hard and fast rule - probably eighteen inches square would do.

I prefer using the broad-source light for my salmon flies because I think it gives a much more pleasing result by virtue of its soft, even quality. A point source, as I said above, gives harsher shadows and highlights which, to me, degrades the appearance of the fly.

When framing the fly in the camera it is a good idea to show just a little bit of the vise jaws to "place" the fly in a setting although a little creativity can be used here. Why not take a piece of glass laid

horizontally, lay the fly on it and shoot down on it? This would thus show the fly without any visible support and your fly would then look like it is truly flying...

DYEING OSTRICH HERL

by Dennis Trudeau

Maybe I've been lucky, but yes, I have been able to dye ostrich herl successfully more than once. Here is how I've done it:

1. Purchase natural gray colored feather dusters that have a considerable number of feathers with small dense herl barbs. Use the larger feathers as test material. The small ones are the prize and the tricky ones.

2. Soak the feathers at least over night in a degreasing detergent. I used Veniard's "Degreaser" and then a second soak in "Venpol".

3. I didn't do anything special or unique in the actual dying except maybe the use of low temperature (under 125) and Veniard dyes.

4. Upon removal from the dye bath, rinse and re-rinse the feathers. Consider shampooing them to get them as clean as possible before starting to dry them.

5. Place the wet feathers, sort of piled upon one another, between some pages of newspaper. Don't let the feathers dry. You want the excess water removed but the feathers should still be rather damp.

6. Use a good multi-setting hair dryer to blow dry each feather. Use a fairly hot setting and a strong blow. If you are cooking your fingers, the blow drying.

I know many of you say to avoid using fly tying wax in tying Salmon flies. It creates unnecessary bulk and is a deterrent to head cement penetration.

However, in tying the last 5% of the fly is where I still run into trouble and resort to using the wax like the old-timers. While using "flat" thread techniques in mounting the wings, (in my case the tying and retying), the thread is subjected to considerable strain. Here at the culmination of possibly hours of work, I quite often develop minor frays in the filaments comprising the thread. These messy frays are a serious problem. The breaking point is near. A whip finish is an adventure. A very judicious addition of wax to the thread can save the day. The thread is strengthened, frayed filaments adhere to one another, and the friction of the whip finish is "greased".

Do you proponents of "no wax" have an alternative solution to the frayed thread problem?

MACAW TAILS

by Wayne Luallen

As Salmon Fly tiers we often tie flies that call for Macaw. The feathers most commonly used come from Ara ararauna (Blue and Yellow Macaw) and Ara Macao (Scarlet Macaw). The most common usage is for horns followed by strips in the wing, and/or veiling at the tail. Occasionally body feathers may be used as hackles, but that will not be discussed here.

The feather most commonly used of all contour feathers [Those feathers that constitute the ordinarily visible plumage and include flight feathers, tail feathers, ear-coverts, tail-coverts and feathers on other parts of the body] are the central tail feathers, of which there are two, a definite right and a definite left.

To differentiate between them on the A. ararauna is generally easy by color alone. Due to more consistent color in the body of the feather on A. Macao, determining right from left requires more careful observation. Often with the blue and yellow feather of A. ararauna the leading edge will be a bit more turquoise in color with the trailing edge more blue. What always holds true in any Macaw is something found at the proximal most barbs on the feather. As one holds the bird's right feather face side up (the blue side of A. ararauna) with the tip pointing away, it will be noted that the barbs attached to the shaft

nearest the quill and on the right will be shorter and grayish, or pale in color. This is the trailing edge. The leading edge will be on the left with barbs more colorful, longer, and having more substance.

As a rule, trailing edge barbs up in the body of the feather will not only be longer, but also less curled than the leading edge barbs. When using Macaw tail barbs for horns, due to the unequalness of length and shape, it is advisable for consistency in tying to not only work from a pair of feathers, using barbs from either the leading or trailing edges, but do not mix them. Also, always select Macaw tail barbs from similar locations up and down the feather for any use. This helps maintain consistent shape and diameter from root to tip.

Feathers often overlooked are the Macaw lateral (side) tail feathers. Those most adjacent to the central tail feathers will be the largest with the most usable quantity of color and length of barbs. Size of a feather is the best determining factor for matching a pair, but when more than a single bird's feathers are mixed into the selection it becomes more difficult. Right and left are more obvious on lateral feathers, but the same tests used to determine the side a central feather came from can be used here. Lateral feathers do differ from central feathers not only in feather length, but also in that the barbs produce a flatter feather. The only curve is a natural, downward, curve on the leading edge nearer the root (sometimes extending to the tip) of the feather. There is an associated reverse curve on the trailing edge, only going part way to the feather tip.

The lateral feathers are regrettably often times ignored by the fly tier. Once the reverse curve on the trailing edge ends, a well colored, very long and useful barb begins. These are superior in application on a wing due to the flatness of the barbs as well as excellent marry-ability of the barbules. A possible disadvantage will be noticed when a strip of barbs is cut away from the feather; the tips of the barbs form a very extreme angle similar to Golden Pheasant lateral tail feathers. This angle is adjusted is desired by the same methods used to adjust any such feather. For instance, by downward or reverse humping the strip and stroking to square the angle; or by remarrying each of the barbs individually. Also, when longer barbs are required than a central tail feather can supply, or when a more two dimensional fly is desired, the trailing edge barbs of lateral tail feathers will be most useful.

THE BLUE BOYNE SET

by Peter J. Caluori

Finding fly dressings that have lapsed into the past, or gaining new insights into standard dressings, can be as satisfying as finding a batch of rare feathers. In The Salmon Fly (1895) George M. Kelson had mentioned both the Red and Bronze Pirates, but neglected to disclose the patterns for either fly and though rendering the dressing for the Bo Peep, he had written very little about the fly. Thus, locating these dressings in earlier publications as part of the Blue Boyne Set is indeed noteworthy.

Prior to writing The Salmon Fly, over a century ago, Kelson had written extensively for the sporting tabloids of the day. In the July 11, 1885 edition of one of these papers, "The Fishing Gazette," Kelson had described the Blue Boyne. Of the Blue Boyne and its inventor, Major Traherne, Kelson had written:

> . . . a veteran angler the other day, during that trying north-east wind and bright sun, when the water was dead low and the fish dreadfully sulky and settled down, gave us one more example of his skill. After a week's perseverance and toil, he designed a fly, and landed his eighty-second spring fish. . . . and there was an immediate demand for blue Chatterers.

The Blue Boyne (Major Traherne)

Hook: No. 7.
Tag: Silver twist and claret silk.
Tail: A golden topping.
Butt: Black herl.
Body: A continuation of the fine silver twist, is divided in three sections (after the fashion of the Popham) with blue chatterer; but the feathers are tied in sideways instead of being flat-that is to say, two or three on either side near the top, and on either side near the bottom; but by no means veiling too much of the body. The first set just overlap the butt; feathers a trifle larger are selected for the center; and still longer ones at the throat, projecting a quarter of an inch towards the barb of the hook.

Wing: The wing is composed of five toppings.
Head: Black herl.

Source: Kelson, George M. "On The Description Of Salmon Flies.-No. 28."

The Fishing Gazette. July 11, 1885.

It is interesting to note that variations exist between "The Fishing Gazette" pattern and the one presented in The Salmon Fly. (In the July 23, 1887 issue of another early sporting tabloid, "Land And Water," Kelson had presented the same version as The Salmon Fly.) In "The Fishing Gazette" pattern, Kelson had indicated a tag of silver twist and claret silk; he omitted the claret silk in The Salmon Fly and "Land And Water" accounts. Other differences included the changing of the tail from a Golden topping to Indian crow, and the incorporation of yellow Macaw in a wing with a reduced number of toppings.

The Blue Boyne (Traherne.)

Tag: Silver twist.
Tail: Two Indian Crow (back to back).
Butt: Black herl.
Body: Silver tinsel (oval, the finest), intersected by four sets of Chatterer above and below at equal distances apart. 1st set at one-fourth of space between butt and head: 3rd set forming throat.
Wings: Two strips of yellow Macaw and two toppings.
Head: Black herl.

Source: Kelson, George M. The Salmon Fly. 1895.

The reasons why discrepancies exist between the Blue Boyne that Kelson had first mentioned in "The Fishing Gazette" and subsequent patterns will probably remain a mystery. In his "Land And Water" account Kelson had written: "The wings then were composed entirely of golden toppings, and that was the original dressing." Therefore, though Kelson had noted the changes, he was lacking in their documentation.

It is in the same "The Fishing Gazette" 1885 article that Kelson had written of his Blue Boyne variation, the Red Pirate. He had stated:

> The only difference between the "Red Pirate" and the "Blue Boyne" is that the former has a blue instead of claret tag, red Indian Crow's feathers instead of blue Chatterers, and Amherst Pheasant horns.

In his 1892 book, How To Tie Salmon Flies, Captain Hale had attributed the Red Pirate to Kelson and rendered it the same way.

The Red Pirate (Mr. Kelson.)

Tag: Silver twist and blue floss. Tail: Topping.
Butt: Black herl.
Body: Silver twist, in three sections, each butted with black herl. At each joint are Indian crow's feathers, sideways, two or three on each side near the top and bottom; the feathers gradually increase in size from the first joint towards the head.
Wings: Five toppings.
Horns: Amherst pheasant.
Head: Black herl.
Hook: No. 7.

Source: Hale, Captain J.H. How To Tie Salmon Flies. 1892.

It is in the August 20, 1887 issue of "Land And Water" that Kelson had given the dressing for the Bronze Pirate.

The Bronze Pirate (Kelson.)

Tag: Silver twist.
Tail: Toucan.

Butt: Black herl.
Body: Silver tinsel, ribbed with silver twist, partially butted in three equal sections with Impeyan Pheasant (cheek feathers) increasing in size.
Wings: Impeyan Pheasant (doubled, crest) and two toppings.
Head: Black herl.

Source: Kelson, George M."Standard Salmon Flies." Land And Water. August 20, 1887.

It seems that Kelson had named these flies according to the color of the body veiling. As to the "Pirate," Kelson himself had stated in "The Fishing Gazette:" " 'Red Pirate'-a capital name, perhaps, as I certainly infringed the 'law of imitation' in delineating the outline, if such law exists."

The Bo Peep, another of Kelson's variations, had been written about in the July 30, 1887 issue of "Land & Water."

> . . . another of the `Blue Boyne' class . . . We will consider it to-day as a change fly to the "Blue Boyne," which, of course, is not infallible . . . and we have "Bo Peep," which I intended for open places, and more particularly when the sun shines.

Though Kelson had not given a dressing at that time, it probably appeared a week later (as was the practice) in the August 6, 1887 issue. Not having access to that issue, I have given the dressing presented in The Salmon Fly.

Bo Peep (Kelson.)

Tag: Silver twist (plenty).
Tail: Toucan (three) and two small Chatterer (back to back).
Butt: Black herl.
Body: In three equal sections of silver tinsel (oval, the finest): No. 1, butted with Toucan above and below, followed by black herl. No. 2, butted with Indian Crow above and below, followed by black herl.
Throat: (or No. 3 section)-Double Chatterer feathers (back to back) on off and on near side.
Wings: Ibis and red Macaw in fibres, and three toppings. Horns: Amherst Pheasant.
Head: Black herl.

Source: Kelson, George M. The Salmon Fly. 1895.

The flies in the Blue Boyne set were all designed for use on a very specific occasion: low water. Thus, Kelson had specified that they be dressed sparsely, and on a small hook. The #7 hook depicted in the plate of Bartleet hooks after the last chapter in The Salmon Fly measures only three quarters of an inch long. Indeed, Kelson had also recommended tying them smaller!

Though my research has identified only these members of the Blue Boyne set, it would seem that Kelson had alluded to others in the August 20, 1887 "Land And Water" article:

> The "Bronze Pirate," the last of my selections from the "Blue Boyne" set, was introduced for using on the special occasions to which I have lately been referring. There are others; but I did not think it necessary to include them in the list. The "Red Pirate," though not so serviceable as "Bo Peep," deserves mention; it is largely known, and was one of my own inventions as well.

It would be most satisfying to uncover the flies that completed the set.

Simple in appearance, complex in execution: if tied accurately, the foregoing flies will provide even the accomplished tyer with a grand challenge. Not only are some of the materials difficult to obtain, but tying on a #7 hook is something only a few tyers have been able to master. So get out those small hooks you have been pushing aside and tie a fly from the Blue Boyne set.

ANONYMA

from the book Rod & River by A. T. Fisher, 1892

by Sol Shamilzadeh

I am always fascinated to discover an antique salmon fly pattern that calls for unusual materials. In this case the "Anonyma" features for its cheek the "unspotted enamelled cinnamon feather from the neck of the jungle-cock." Those privileged to have in their possession jungle cock obtained prior to the 1967 revision of the Tariff Classification Act, may or may not have these particular feathers on their cape depending on the way the cape was skinned.

Tag: Silver twist & lemon floss-silk
Tail: A topping & an Indian Crow's feather
Butt: Red Ostrich
Body: Flat silver tinsel ribbed with gold twist
Throat: Yellow or orange hackle with darkish-red hackle over
Wings: Tippet & saddle feathers, back to back veiled with golden-pheasant tail, mallard, peacock wing, gray mallard, strips of red & yellow swan, and a topping over all.
Cheek: Unspotted enamelled cinnamon feather from the neck of the jungle-cock.
Horns: Red macaw
Head: Black ostrich

The Salmon Flyer
Vol. 3 - No.2, Summer, 1991 (There was no Spring 1991 issue published)

THE SALMON FLYER

Blue-eyed Monster

by

Bob Veverka

BLUE-EYED MONSTER

By Bob Veverka
Underhill, Vermont

I first tied the Blue-eyed Monster several years ago. At, the time I had been tying quite a few classics----in this case, flies with body veilings on edge: Blue Boynes, Red Pirates, etc. I had some good materials on hand and wanted to invent a few patterns of my own. I tied some low winged and married winged patterns, but, wished to do a big feather pattern, a. fly with a classic look which would also have the appearance of a moth.

I had caught a buckeye moth and took that as my inspiration. The buckeye has spots on its wings, so if I wanted my fly to resemble a buckeye, I would have to find a suitable feather with spots. I decided on the Palawan peacock pheasant quill; it has two spots and it has a moth-like look.

I started with a tip of oval silver tinsel and a tag of purple floss. You don't see many classics with a purple tag, but it is a color I really like to work with. For the tail I used a golden pheasant crest and for veilings I chose chatterer tied on edge. After I tied in the top veilings, I lthought it might look interesting to tie in a set of the veilings on the bottom; it looked good, so I left them as they were. Next came a butt of black herl, and then the back half of the body: purple floss ribbed with medium-fine oval silver tinsel, veiled on the bottom with chatterer on edge. Then a butt of black herl.

For the front half of the body I went with red floss and a rib of medium oval silver tinsel, hackled with black or purple or both, then, a collar of black.

For the wing, nothing proved as good as the Palawan peacock pheasant quill. When you tie in the quills for the wing; flatten them with flat-nosed pliers. Then take each quill separately - hold them in the pliers and, at the spot where the fibers start, bend the quill backwards. Move the pliers forward about two of three thread turns in distance. While holding the quill in the pliers, twist the quill up and in. If this makes sense and you do it correctly, you will find that by precrimping, the wing can be tied in easily.

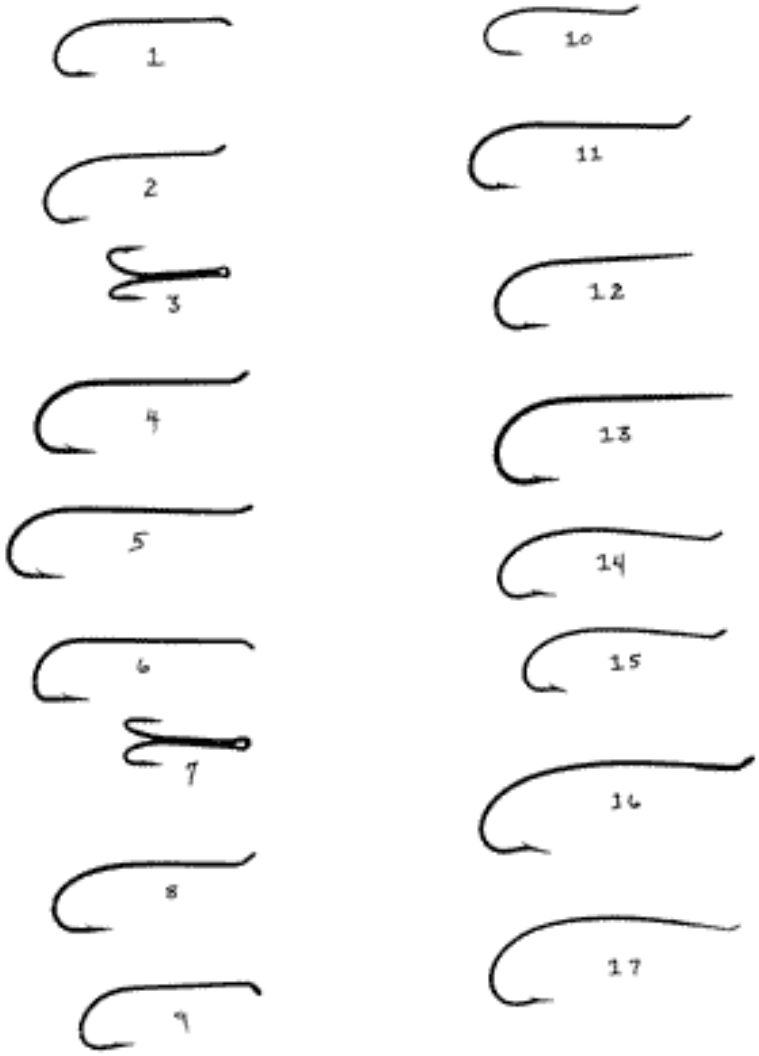
After I had the wing tied in I put on side veilings of jungle cock, then Indian crow, then chatterer. Crest of golden pheasant and horns of scarlet macaw; your choice. I finished with a herl head for the classic touch. The herl head is an area I have tried to perfect on my flies and it took some time to them to look the way I wanted, but it was worth the trouble. I've had a few tiers and collectors comment on the way I do my herl heads. Sometimes it is the small things that make the difference.

Since I tied the Blue-eyed Monster, I've done quite a few of my own patterns, some nice ones, but nothing to compare with the combination of materials on the Blue-eyed. Experimentation and luck are key. There is a lot of activity surrounding salmon flies now, with some outstanding tiers at work. I'm sure we will see some beautiful creations in the years to come. Have fun and keep tying.

FREE!!!!
REAL INDIAN CROW, CHATTERER AND BUSTARD

by William Chinn, Jr.

Lake Oswego, Oregon



Reproduced here are sixteen types of salmon-fly hooks (see next page) I have accumulated over the years, plus one more. Most are still commercially available.

(Reader): Hey, what about the free Indian crow?

I'll say something about each hook in the hope that it will be of some help to you when choosing hooks for fishing or exhibition tying. I won't be pulling any punches; but remember, it's only my opinion.

1) #2 SEB Partridge, sizes range from #2 to #6. Price estimated at $22.00 per hundred. Availability in stores is rare. Overall good quality, but I wish it was made in larger sizes. Best down eye I have come across and Atlantic salmon flies for fishing tied on this hook look fine.

2) #2 Wilson (salmon dry-fly hook by Partridge), sizes range from #2 to #16. Priced at $22.00 per hundred. Quality control might be a problem here, as hooks can vary from package to package. A larger size is needed for exhibition flies. Hook shank strength could be stronger. I wouldn't use this hook for Chinook or large fish in heavy water, nor does the lightwire shank sink well. Small Speys and Dees look fine on this hook and the very small size makes them lovely dry-fly hooks.

3) #4 Partride Double (Wilson Double not shown), sizes range from #2 to #10. Price estimated at $50.00 per hundred. Flies ride nicely in the water on double hooks, but beware, they are illegal to fish in many areas. The Wilson Double has a longer shank than the Partridge Double, and the General Practioner looks handsome on it. Availability of double hooks in the United States is rare.

4) 3/0 Partridge M Single Salmon (regular), sizes range from #4/0 to #10. Priced at $22.00-$30.00 per 100. A strong and heavy hook. During winter it is one of the very best hooks, in its largest sizes. This is the model that Bill McMillan uses for his Winter's Hope.

5) 3/0 Partridge N Single Salmon (low-water style), sizes range from #3/0 to #10. Priced at $22.00-$30.00 per 100. My favorite fishing hook in its largest sizes (#3/0 to #1/0). They are sharp, strong, and they sink well.

6) #l Partridge Bob Jones 6X Long Streamer Hook, sizes range from # 1 to #8. Priced at $5.95 per 25. Though not a salmon hook, it can be used for Dees and Speys (finished in black). This hook is also sharp, strong and a good sinker.

7) #4 Turrall Double. An English double I believe is no longer available in the United States.

8) 2/0 Tiemco 7999, sizes range from #2/0 to #8. Priced at $23.00-$27.50 per 100. A strong hook, but only satisfactory in appearance. The barb is very low and the point sharp, but difficult to resharpen once dulled.

9) 1/0 Tiemco 700 Down Eye, sizes range from #1/0 to #8. Priced at $15.00-$20.00 per 100. The simple ball eye detracts from the hook's appearance. Compare this hook with the #2 SEB hook (see number 1). It is a strong, sharp hook.

10) #4 Tiemco 7989 Dry Fly Style, sizes range from #2 to #8. Priced at $23.00 per 100. I don't care for its looks and I am suspicious of the strength of the wire.

11) 2/0 Sprite (English). Absolutely the worst hook I've ever used. The only time I used it (and it figures that most of the hooks I had that day were tied on Sprites), the hook cost me a minimum of five silver salmon. The point is brittle and breaks easily.

12) 2/0 Rational Hook (copy of Pryce-Tannatt's hook made for Fabbeni). Not attractive at all. It looks to me as if many of the hooks used in Classic Salmon Flies: History and Patterns by Mikael Frodin, are tied on these hooks.

13) 5/0 Partridge CS6 Blind Eye, estimated size range #5/0 to #2/0. Priced at $7.60 per 10. An ugly hook with occasional file-scarred points.

14) 1 1/2 Alec Jackson Spey Hook, sizes range #1 1/2 to #7. A fine hook for fishing Speys and Dees. They did come in various finishes: black, blue, bronze, gold, and silver. They are sharp and strong. Their current status is in question.

15) #2 Partridge Bartleet (original McNeese run). No longer made due to the shank's penchant for releasing fish. An attractive style that can give a Spey or Dee a wicked appearance. I miss the look of this style.

16) 3/0 Bartleet Salmon CS10 (Partridge), sizes range from #3/0 to #6. Priced at $24.00-$30.00 per 100. Like the above two hooks, it is sharp, strong, and hooks fish well. Getting the fish off the hook can be difficult due to the angle of the barb and the point.

17) A hook I look forward to using in the future, when it is in production, is "Lil" Davey McNeese's Blue Heron Spey Hook. Sizes will be from #3/0 to #6. Estimated price is $23.00-$30.00 per 100. When will it be available? You all know "Lil" Davey. 1992 at the earliest.

Not Shown: Mustad 36890, sizes range from #6/0 to #12. Priced at $7.50-$13.50 per 100. If you cut off the eyes of the larger hooks (#6/0 to #2/0), you can improve their looks. The turned-up eye is probably the ugliest in the business, and the looped eye isn't tapered, resulting in a loser for an area to tie the head.

Not Shown: Mustad 90240 (low-water, salmon-fly hook, also used for dry flies), sizes range from #4 to #10. Priced at $6.50 per 100. The shank is weak, and the point is the weakest I've encountered; even your fingernail can bend this point. I recommended to a friend to give the toss to his two boxes of 90240s. Not only did he refuse, he went so far as to fish with them. Every fly came back straightened or with a damaged point. He got the message.

Not Shown: Mustad 7970, sizes range from #1 to #10. Priced at $6.50 per 100. A bronzed, down-eye, 5X stout, salmon- steelhead hook. A hook that gets down deep and its strength is legendary. Start sharpening the larger sizes weeks before you are to go fishing; the job takes awhile.

CAUTION: Casting a large (#6/0 to #1/0) hook can be dangerous to your health. My weapon of choice is an 11-12 weight rod and my tippet ranges between 8 pound and 20 pound test. These make casting the large hooks somewhat easier. If you take a #3/0 hook in the head or back, you'll know how Custer felt at Little Big Horn.

Well, that's all. Hope it might help.

(Reader): Whoa!! After all that, aren't you going to give us the low down on the free chatterer, Indian crow, and bustard?

(Author): One born every minute!

SIR ALEC

by Robert Arnold
Seattle, Washington

This is the dressing of a new fly honoring Alec Jackson, known to many of us as an innovative tier and generous friend. It was originally designed by Bob Arnold and first tied by Steve Gobin. Gobin later modified it slightly. Arnold then incorporated the common features of both versions and set aside the differences, which were tiny. It is an exhibition fly and is about as complicated as they come. Tiers should see it as a challenge. It also makes a pretty wall hanging.

SIR ALEC

Tag - silver twist and dark blue floss
Tail - crest, wood duck, Indian crow
Butt - red wool
Body - first third, silver tinsel, ribbed with gold oval, veiled with Indian crow, above and below, and butted with red wool; second third, same as the first, including veil and butt; third third, hot orange dubbing, ribbed with oval, over which is wrapped a hot orange hackle
Throat - red-dyed galena
Underwing - jungle cock to inside the tail
Wing - married strands of yellow, orange, red, florican, green, blue, speckled bustard, dark turkey, two toppings
Sides - jungle cock
Cheeks - blue chatterer
Horns - red macaw

NEWS AND REVIEWS

by Wayne Luallen
Visalia, California

TWO NEW VIDEOS

We finally have someone else in the group willing to put his neck on the line and share his tying techniques on video tape.

Tom Juracek has self-produced two video tapes that you will want to purchase. His first was of a Green Highlander that I would recommend to the tier more in the beginning to early-intermediate stage of tying

salmon flies. His second tape, which I will describe more fully, is directed at all levels of expertise, but the beginning to intermediate tiers especially will find it invaluable.

Tom's second tape begins with a critique of several of his own flies that are shown. He explains his style, where he went right, and where he went wrong. Before he begins tying the fly - a Dusty Miller - Tom discusses evaluation and selection, cleaning, and preparation of the materials he will use. He also talks about planning the fly, which includes style as well as what he refers to as "color coordination." When he actually ties the fly (on both tapes), the camera is between the fly and himself, making it very difficult for Tom, but giving the viewer a ringside seat. He does not hide anything. All mistakes are shown and corrections are made with explanations---most helpful for any student of salmon-fly tying.

THE ATLANTIC SALMON FLY, THE TYERS AND THEIR ART

PRESS RELEASE

The Atlantic Salmon Fly, the Tyers and their Art, a new book by Judith Dunham, will be available from Chronicle Books in September of this year.

For a year and a half, Dunham traveled to Europe and Canada, and around the United States, to research the history of the Atlantic salmon fly and to interview twenty-three flytyers. In the extensive published interviews, the tyers talk about their approach to tying Atlantic salmon flies, the historical influences on their work, and their flytying and flyfishing experiences. The book features Jerry Doak and Warren Duncan from Canada, Megan Boyd, Stewart Canham, Hans de Groot, and Jimmy Younger from Europe, Ken Sawada from Japan, and the following tyers from the United States: Poul Jorgensen, Mike Martinek, Bob Veverka, Charlie Krom, Paul Schmookler, Bill Hunter, Keith Fulsher, Ron Alcott, Albert Cohen, Steve Fernandez, Judy Lehmberg, Wayne Luallen, John Van Derhoof, Ted Niemeyer, Marvin Nolte, and Eric Otzinger.

The flies of the twenty-three tyers are shown in forty-four fullcolor photographs by San Francisco photographer John Clayton. Judith Dunham's ten-page introduction is lavishly illustrated with photographs of materials. The appendix includes a bibliography and eleven pages of fly dressings accompanied by photographs of historical and contemporary hooks. The pages of this large format book measure 12 inches tall by 10 inches wide.

The Atlantic Salmon Fly is available in a limited edition of three hundred numbered copies, signed by the author and the photographer, quarter-bound in leather, and enclosed in a slipcase.

THE SALMON FLYER

Brora

Tied by Megan Boyd

TYING THE BRORA, A DEE FLY

By Robert Arnold
Seattle, Washington

The Brora is a river in northern Scotland. It is a short river that enters the North Sea from the west. The fly celebrating the river was brought to the attention of Colonel Joe Bates and listed in his 1970 book, Atlantic Salmon Flies and Fishing. He says that it was sent to him by Megan Boyd (the famed fly dresser who lives in Brora) and she believes it was a favorite pattern of Charles Ackroyd, who also lived in Brora, Sunderland. Bates correctly says it is a beautiful fly and "resembles the much simpler predominantly black patterns so successful on North American rivers, such as the Miramichi." He adds that "it resembles slightly" the Ackroyd patterns.

Miss Boyd kindly sent him the fly and the dressing, and on page 108 it is pictured. With its pink (lilac) butt and oval silver tinsel body veiled with toucan, it is quite bright, at least its stern is; forward, the fly is dark, black, with a floss body and "two" turns of black heron. This gives the Ackroyd touch. The tail is the usual golden pheasant crest, over "which are tied a few fibers of blue kingfisher half as long as the crest."

The winging is unusual and again Miss Boyd is precise: "two cinnamon turkey strips, outside of which are married strips of blue and white swan, outside of which are strips of pintail two-thirds as long as the inside strips." The fly pictured on page 108 comes as slight surprise, however. Knowing of its Ackroyd origin, one might expect it to be tied on a Dee iron, but the hook is the traditional ordinary salmon. It might be one-X long, but no longer. The cinnamon turkey appears to be white tipped and the blue in the wing is nearly obscured by the pintail, as is the white swan or goose. On the same page is an Ackroyd, also dressed by Miss Boyd on what seems to be the same style hook. A fine Jock Scott by her is on the same page, which proves that she deserves her high reputation. That hook, though larger, appears to be of the same relative short-shank length.

Okay. So when Colonel Bates did his 1987 book, The Art of the Atlantic Salmon Fly, shortly before his death, on Plate XXIV there is a Brora again – much larger in scale and easier to see. Miss Boyd tied this

one, too. It is a little different, this time. The turkey is not cinnamon with a white tip, but a deep, dark cinnamon – a good, reddish brown feather was used. The wing is nicely tapered to fill the inside of the curve of the tail's crest. The kingfisher is less than one-third the crest's length, for what it's worth. The blue and white swan are of equal width, nicely pointed, and they perfectly split the turkey wing as sides, according to the original pattern. In other words, the wing is turkey, but it has sides or veilings of the two primary colors. Now, seventeen years later, the strips alongside the outer wing are . . . wood duck, not pintail. And the strips are pretty close to two-thirds the length of the married swan. The "heron" is piled deftly over itself, making for a full throat, and is not palmered the length of the black floss, as it was earlier. The hook is now a correct long shank.

Alec Jackson says that Miss Boyd does what is difficult easily, but what is less difficult not all so well. He also tells me that she was indebted to Stan Bogan for her supply of "summer duck" – what we call wood duck. That material is fairly easily obtained throughout North America today, but it was rare in Britain for most of this century, and flies were tied with teal or pintail alone, when dressings called for either summer duck or that feather married to teal. So it would seem that when she could get it, she used it. Otherwise, like all of us, she went without. The pattern might easily be amended today to encompass wood (or summer) duck.

What do these slight differences indicate, if anything? Miss Boyd is a practical fly tier, who makes her living cranking out flies professionally. Over time she may well tie the same fly slightly differently, depending upon a change in attitude or the availability of hooks and materials. A professional tier has to produce in volume, day after day, something we "amateur" tiers do not. Always the clock is ticking and the day's wage to be earned.

Eugene Sunday sent me a photo of his Brora a couple of years ago. It is tied on one of his fine handmade hooks-slender, graceful, long in the shank. It is, in fact, the type of iron that Ackroyd might have selected. Eugene's tinsel, however, is gold, a gold so deep it might well be termed copper. With the (true) toucan, and the dark lilac tag, the fly starts changing. His black heron is beautifully sparse and long; in comparison, it looks as if Miss Boyd substituted black spade hackle or schlappen. Again, availability may be the reason for change.

Where Eugene differs from both of Miss Boyd's versions is in the winging. Two married blue-white strips form the outer wing and reach clear to the tail, forming a long, slender shaft that just touches the crest of the tail. Since there is no topping over the wing in the dressing, the upper strip of cinnamon turkey serves as a topping, and his joins the tail perfectly. A fine wood duck strip about half the width of the wing and just short of half the wing's length runs down the side. With a short kingfisher feather above the tail, this version most closely conforms to what I think Ackroyd might have had in mind when he designed the fly for his river's fishing.

I have now tied Brora twice and am not happy with my work. I can picture it in my mind tied with a blind-eye long-shank hook I do not have, its cinnamon wings drooping, a full black heron hackle palmered luxuriously down its front half. But what do I do about that blue and white wing? Tie it low and flat, the way Bob Veverka might handle it, with the wood duck mere strips alongside? That might be the answer.

Whatever, it is a handsome fly and, as the Colonel said, suitable for the Miramichi and other salmon streams. It should catch summer-run steelhead, too, fished on a floating line in the surface film, on rivers such as the Wenatchee and Grande Ronde, in my home state of Washington. I intend to put Brora to the test, this fall.

HAPPY HEAD HERLS

By Marvin Nolte
Bar Nunn, Wyoming

Am I the only one having trouble putting the black ostrich ruff on the head of a fly? I will wager not. A solution came to mind when I recalled that until very recently flies were tied with waxed silk. Waxed--not with the pitiful portion of wimpy wax that comes on modern "prewaxed" threads, but with real WAX. If you will lay a foundation of thread waxed with a quality, adhesive wax, you will discover that your herl no longer cascades down the head as you wrap it. Works well on butts also. One word of caution--wrap the herl carefully. You cannot back up and start again with this system, for the barbules will be horribly matted. Cannot find a quality, adhesive wax? The formula I prefer is seven parts rosin, two parts beeswax, and one part castor oil.

MOUNTING SALMON FLIES

BY Tom Juracek
Aurora, Colorado

Many tiers, having just finished the finest salmon fly the world has ever seen, wish to mount the fly for display. There are several methods of mounting available, ranging from extremely inexpensive to very expensive. I have had some experience with each of the methods mentioned and will try to provide a few guidelines.

The least expensive method of mounting a salmon fly involves the use of "glass" domes. These glass (usually plastic) domes are available at local craft shops. I purchase mine from a retailer known as Michaels. The domes come in two parts: the base is made of wood and is contoured to accept a matching dome. The combined price is usually less than $5.00. A 3 X 4 dome is suitable for mounting one fly.

A 1/8-inch hole is drilled into the top of the base, slightly off center. A section of 1/8-inch dowel, roughly 1 1/2 inches long (stained and painted to match the base), is inserted into the hole in the base. The point of the hook is then pressed into the dowel and a small drop of super glue is placed where the hook meets dowel. Use a wood glue for added security to keep the dowel in the base. This type of mounting allows viewing the fly from all angles. The dome can also be placed anywhere on a desk or table, thus not restricting the mounted flies to a wall. You may consider purchasing a larger dome for several flies. You could also purchase small flowers and wrap them around the dowel and cover the base inside the dome with lichen for a more artistic look, although the sparse look of the dowel rod draws the viewer's attention directly to the fly.

A second method for mounting flies involves the use of a shadow box. I prefer those that do not have compartments and that have a glass front. The method is the next least expensive, with shadow boxes running around $10.00 to $15.00. Again, check local craft and hobby shops for these items. Mounting your flies in shadow boxes is slightly more involved than the domes. You will not have control over the size of the box, so it is wise to purchase the box first and then select the flies to be placed therein. If only three or four flies will fit inside, consider tying patterns that have one or two colors in common. This will help to lend a "collection" look to the box, rather than just a bunch of flies. For example, you may tie flies that all call for whole tippets as underwings. To mount the flies in the box, decide first what type of color background will best show off the flies. Felt often works well in colors of dark blue, grey, black, or white. Remove the bark of the shadow box and glue the felt down to the back. Use a common, household white glue. After applying the glue to the back, smear it so that only a fine coat covers the entire surface. If you leave the glue in blobs or streaks, it will soak and shrink the felt in those places and will be visible in the finished product.

Next, place your flies in the appropriate locations. Two mounting methods exist for the shadow box, both again involving the use of dowels. The dowels can be placed so that the hook point is stuck into them. This will leave the dowels visible in the finished product. The other method involves mounting the fly body to the end of the dowel. This method often covers the dowel. For either method, note the location of the dowels and soak it with a little head cement in order to firmly glue the surface of the felt to the backing. If you do not soak the felt before mounting the dowel, the weight of the fly against the loose weave of the felt will cause the dowel to droop. The objective here is to mat the felt underneath the dowel so this will not happen. Mount the dowel to the back of the shadow box using your favorite brand of super glue or head cement. If you have elected to leave the dowels visible, paint the dowel to match the background before mounting them. (NOTE: if you cover the dowel with the fly, you may also wish to paint the dowel, but do not paint the end upon which you will mount the fly.) For mounting the fly to the dowel, I use super glue.

The issue has been raised of ruining the fly by the use of glue. My opinion is that if you intend to mount the fly, you have no intention of doing anything else with it. If for some reason you decide to sell it, well… it comes with the case. On the majority of flies, the best mounting point will be on the far side of the fly at the fourth turn of tinsel. Mounting the fly on the tinsel seems to be the strongest method, and when located at the fourth turn, the dowel will generally be hidden from view. If necessary, prop up the bend of the hook until the glue has set. Make sure your fly remains level. Floss is the next best body material to attach to the dowel, while fur is almost impossible. If fur or dubbing must be used, handle them as you did the felt.

Always compare the depth of the shadow box to the height of the dowel before attaching your flies. Leave adequate room for the fly. A 3/8- to 1/2-inch dowel is more than sufficient to lift the fly off the back of the box.

The final method is by far the most expensive: custom mounting. This type of mounting can accommodate any number of flies. The price will vary depending on the number of flies to be mounted, but expect to spend a minimum of $60.00 for six flies.

Here is the basic construction. Go to your local framing shop and look at frames that have a depth of two or three inches. This framing material will be similar to the outside walls on a shadow box. It is referred to as molding by the trade. Most frame shops will have only two or three styles, but they can be quite beautiful, with carved patterns, maybe inlaid gold trim. Determine the size of the box to be made and have the framer cut the material. If you wish, the framer can also assemble the material.

Regarding the size of the box, lay out your flies and determine how much space you will require. Try different designs of layout and leave a lot of space between the flies. This method of mounting allows you to determine the number of flies to be mounted, and their arrangement. After deciding on your size, add three inches to each outside measurement to allow for the selection of one or more mattes. Consider carefully your selection of matte color. You may wish to have an oval, rather than rectangular, cut. Or you may decide upon several small ovals rather than one large one. You may also decide to try a triple matte, with the outside a blue-grey and the inside being orange or yellow, the inside mattes being chosen to highlight particular colors in the flies. The point being that all of these considerations require space, so make sure you take this into account as you determine the size of the frame.

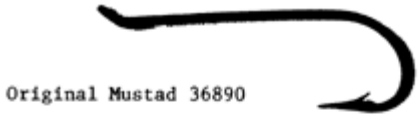
The flies are mounted within a foamcore box. I often use the white of the foamcore as a backdrop in the box, and the mattes can be used to provide color. Mounting methods are the same as those used in shadow boxes. The dowel is glued directly to the foamcore and then the fly is attached to the dowel. In order to visualize the construction, think of clothes boxes such as Christmas packages are wrapped in. The bottom of the clothes box is the foamcore. The box is made by attaching the "walls" to the bottom. The bottom should be the same size as the inside dimensions of the frame. The height of the walls should be the same as the inside depth of the frame. The top of the clothes box is the frame, complete with glass and mattes. Just as the clothes box fits together, so too the frame slips over the foamcore box. The walls of the foamcore box keep the glass and mattes secure. The frame is then stapled to the foamcore box.

This type of mounting is distinguished and classy. It is similar to the boxes advertised in magazines, but allows tiers complete control over all aspects.

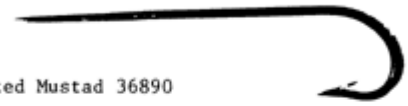
One last hint. If you are intent upon dressing several flies for mounting, find some small plastic boxes for shortterm storage of the finished flies. I tape a small piece of Styrofoam into the box and press the hook point into the Styrofoam. Storing flies in this manner keeps them free of dust and dirt, and prevents accidental brushing or crushing of the flies.

SOME THOUGHTS ON HOOK ADAPTATION

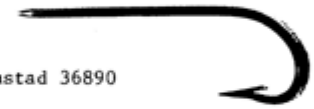
by Dave Potts
Portland, Oregon



Original Mustad 36890



Adapted Mustad 36890



Adapted Mustad 36890

Original Mustad 3366

Adapted Mustad 3366

I recently gave some thought to making my own "antique" hooks. As members are undoubtedly aware, most hooks on the market today just don't make the grade aesthetically. The barbs are too big, the points too long, and most offensive are those atrocious eyes, which destroy whatever intrinsic grace the fly might have possessed.

As I sat glumly looking at a bunch of Mustad 4/0 (36890, 3366) salmon hooks, it occurred to me that I might do some handiwork with a file, wire cutters, and a $13.00 blowtorch (no, this isn't "The Great Escape"). To my surprise, I discovered that by glowing and stretching out the eye and filing the shank down to a taper, I had a hook that while not award winning was one with which I could work. Glowing and turning the bend, filing the point and barb, and there I had it.

Recoloring the hook also seemed a good idea, so I went to the paint department of a local store and purchased a can of black Krylon appliance spray paint. If the hook is clean and smooth, it will take the paint like a dream. Let the hook set for a day over a source of heat and you will wind up with a very reasonable "antique" blind-eye hook, ready for dressing. By the way, Taverner is a good guide for hook shapes. There is no limit to the size hook you can create, so no longer are you a slave to hook manufacturers. You can even make Dee irons.

Think of the hideous irons of today as ugly ducklings; there's beauty lurking beneath that woeful exterior--there's gold in them hills--waiting to be found.

A TALE OF THREE CLASSES

by Dave Burns
San Jose, California

Four years ago, while attending the Federation of Fly Fishers Northern California Council Conclave in Lake Tahoe, I happened across John Van Derhoof tying Atlantic salmon flies. I was fascinated by his skill and patience. I watched John, asked questions, and generally made a pest of myself. On the trip home, I couldn't shake those spectacular flies from my mind.

I bought and read every book I could find on Atlantic salmon flies. I started tying, first butchering a Green Highlander, and then doing the same to an Evening Star, but I kept plugging away.

In April, the FFF Southwest Council Conclave met in Los Angeles. I was hoping to run into John again, but learned he would not be tying. Another Atlantic salmon fly tier was demonstarting, Jim Carpenter, so I parked myself in front of him and didn't move. After watching Jim work, listening to the histories behind the flies he was tying, and gathering up a pocketful of $100 tips, I asked if he would be willing to come to San Jose and teach a beginner's course. He said he would be delighted.

I needed ten people who were interested in tying Atlantic salmon flies to make up the class, but such fly tying had yet to catch on in my area. We did pull the class together and made arrangements for Jim to teach the class in January 1989. It was a huge success. Jim's tying skills and tips, along with a liberal dose of historical anecdotes, made for exceptional day. We tied a Blue Charm, a Silver Doctor, and a Butcher. It was a tough lesson and we gained respect for those who have mastered Atlantic salmon fly tying skills. What left the greatest impression on me was the stories behind the flies, information that gave the class a sense of completeness.

In August of 1989 I met Wayne and Donna Luallen at the FFF Northern California Conclave in Redding. I asked Wayne to teach our second class. He agreed and set me hard to work. Jim had spoiled us, providing all the materials for the class. Wayne asked us to acquire our own materials. My first thought was: eight tiers, three flies, no problem. Let's just say I was a bit off target. I quickly learned why Wayne's flies are so beautiful – he is painstaking about the materials he uses. I had to wash and steam crests, sort them according to size, then shape and stack them. Eric Otzinger graciously provided the dyed turkey (not goose!) we required, or I would have been scouring turkey farms all over the state for scarlet (not red!) feathers. Months later we were ready, but something told me all had not been pulled together. Wayne was reassuring, but told me to bring the tea kettle. We tied a Durham Ranger, a Green Highlander, and a blind-eye Baron on Gene Sunday's handmade hooks. We used a video camera and monitor to see the detailed work and after a day and a half of frustration and merriment we adjourned. Wayne's attention to detail and his urging to do the job correctly had us exhausted by Sunday night. It became clear that a class by Wayne on materials and preparation would be time well spent.

Our third class was taught by Marvin Nolte in September 1990. He supplied all the materials, and we were more than happy to let him do so, despite (or perhaps because of) the education given us by Wayne. The class took two full days, tying a mixed-wing Black Dog, and a Jock Scott and Popham on blind-eye hooks. Marvin spoiled us in the extreme: all the materials and specialty tools were separated into containers. We used speckled bustard, florican, argus (dyed yellow to substitute for the woeful-to-marry golden pheasant tail), toucan and dyed swan for wings. We even had French silk instead of rayon. Here was a chance to use the real thing and compare it to the substitutes we had been using. Marvin had us marry all the wings right at the start and I am sure that this saved us at least two hours of class time. We asked a lot of Marvin with the flies we chose to tie, and it is a tribute to his talent and patience that the class was so successful. Again we used a video camera and monitor.

The problems encountered in our classes have been minimal. The only real trouble I had was acquiring materials for Wayne's class. Having the instructor supply the materials seems the best way to go. They know exactly what materials they want to use and how to prepare them. This also saves class time by not having to fuss over contrary materials.

Here are a few things to consider when planning an Atlantic salmon-fly class:

- Plan for the class at least six months in advance. This will give both you and the instructor ample time to remedy any problems that might arise.

- Stress that your tiers be advanced. One slow tier can be a source of real frustration for others.
- Ask the instructor to photograph the flies to be tied and have color photocopies made for each student. The cost is minimal and it provides a valuable reference.
- Never take on more than three flies per class.
- Use a video camera and monitor. You can see small details from across the room. A 12X zoom camera will fill the screen with the fly from about six feet away.
- Limit the class to eight students, more is a strain on the instructor.
- Take an occasional break to stay relaxed. Break for lunch and get away from the tying desk; you'll come back refreshed. Get together for dinner after the session.
- If this is your first class, tie on loop-eyed hooks. Blind eyes may prove to be too difficult.

While I have not covered every detail, I hope I have provided some insight into the planning of a salmon-fly class. I might even have shaken a few instructors out of the bushes. I have learned more in these three classes than I ever would have in a lifetime of reading. The pleasure of getting to know Jim, Wayne, and Marvin cannot be put into words. They are masters of the art and I am fortunate to count them as my friends.

The Salmon Flyer
Vol. 4 - No.1, Winter, 1992

THE SALMON FLYER

Blacker Fly # 12

Tied by Mike Radencich

THE BLACKER 15

By Mike Radencich
Kansas City, Missouri

Any one even remotely interested in the history of Atlantic salmon flies has run across the name of William Blacker, the true doyen of 19th century fly tying.

His little 1855 book, The Art of Fly Making, has become one of the most sought after tomes of that era, not just for its beautifully rendered, hand-colored plates of flies and fly tying techniques, but also for its time machine quality: the ability to transport one back to the infancy of the gaudy, fully dressed salmon fly.

Some of my most challenging salmon fly tying was found in this book – just to interpret some the recipes to produce the flies was a chore in itself. To help in this regard, I would like to pass along these interpretations to other tiers. Please note that I do not sue the term “interpretation” lightly, since may of these description are open to some variation. Take, for example, Blacker’s recipe for fly no. 3 on page 107:

“No. 3. This is another of the Spirit Flies that kill so well in the rivers of Ireland and Scotland, at high water, particularly the Spey and Tweed. The wings are made of the following mixtures of feathers, each side of the wings to be alike: Brown mallard, bustard, wood-duck; a topping, scarlet macaw, teal, golden pheasant neck feather, a strip of black ostrich; the tail to be a topping, mixed with green and red parrot tail; the body is composed of joints, first a tip of silver, a tag on morone floss, a tag of black, a joint of brown, green and brown-red hackle, puce and red, green and yellow, blue and orange, with a tip of gold tinsel at each joint, a very small red hackle, and two red toucan feathers round the shoulder, and blue kingfisher’s feather on each side of the wings. The hook N. 6, and No. 10 for Grilse.”

I hope my "translations" will help you gain more enjoyment from tying these truly classic patterns.

#1. "THE SPIRIT FLY"

Tag: Gold tinsel and puce silk.
Tail: Two toppings.
Butt: Black ostrich herl.
Body: Five equal sections of orange silk with a small tip (two or three turns) of fine gold tinsel at the end of each followed by a scarlet hackle wound as a butt at each joint.
Throat: Purple or dark blue hackle.
Wings: Six toppings with a long strip of summer duck along the top edge on either side--these should reach to just past the bend of the hook; cock of the rock on each side and Himalayan pheasant crest feather over all (possible substitute for this might be an Amherst pheasant crest feather--there is some thought that this may well be what Blacker meant by Himalayan pheasant crest).
Cheeks: Kingfisher.
Horns: Blue and yellow macaw. Head: Black.

#2. (unnamed)

Tag: Silver tinsel and gold silk. Tail: A topping and summer duck. Butt: Black ostrich herl.
Ribs: Broad flat silver tinsel.
Throat: Gallina rump followed by jay.
Wings: Mixed golden pheasant tail, bustard, scarlet macaw, summer duck, mallard, yellow macaw body-feather strips and silver pheasant tail with a topping over all.
Horns: Blue and yellow macaw.
Head: Black herl.

#3. "ANOTHER SPIRIT FLY"

Tag: Silver tinsel and maroon silk.
Tail: A topping and green and red parrot tail.
Butt: Black ostrich herl.
Body: first 1/4 of brown silk with a tip of extra-fine oval gold tinsel and a butt of a green and red-brown hackle; 2nd 1/4 of puce silk, a tip as before and a red hackle; 3rd 1/4 of green silk, a tip as before and a yellow hackle; 4th 1/4 of blue silk, a tip as before and an orange hackle.
Throat: A small red hackle and two red toucan.
Wings: An underwing of tippets back to back; brown mallard, bustard, summer duck, scarlet macaw, teal, a strip of yellow macaw with a topping over all.
Horns: Blue and yellow macaw.
Head: Black herl.

#4. "A CELEBRATED CLARET FLY"

Tag: Silver tinsel.
Tail: Two or three hen pheasant fibers and a strip of orange macaw body feather.
Body: Claret pig's wool.
Hackle: Claret from the tail.
Wings: Two unbarred summer duck feathers as the main wing with strips of barred summer duck on either side.
Head: Peacock herl.

#5. “BROWN FLY”

Tag: Gold tinsel and gold silk.
Tail: A topping.
Body: Cinnamon or yellow-brown pig's wool or mohair.
Ribs: Double-fine oval silver tinsel.
Hackle: Red-brown from tail.
Wings: Rather broad golden pheasant tail (the underfeathers with the cloudy black barring) with broad white-tipped turkey-tail strips on either side--they can be light brown or cinnamon.
Horns: Scarlet macaw.
Head: Peacock herl.

#6. “A SILVER GREY FLY”

Tag: Silver tinsel and orange silk.
Tail: A topping, red and powdered blue macaw and Gallina.
Body: Silver monkey or light dun fox or squirrel or blue dun mohair mixed with yellow.
Ribs: Broad flat silver tinsel.
Hackle: Natural dun with a yellowish shade.
Throat: Bright orange with a little orange mohair underneath.
Wings: Golden pheasant tail mixed with red macaw, strips of blue and yellow macaw body feathers, thin strips of golden pheasant tippet near the top of the wing and guinea hen.
Horns: Blue and yellow macaw.
Head: Black.

#7. A LARGE DUN PALMER”

Hooks: This fly uses a double hook: tie a second hook upside down onto the top of the first about 1/4 of the way down the shank (of the first). Tie the gut loop to the second hook in the normal way (see illustration).
Body: Orange pig's wool and yellow mohair mixed.
Hackle: Use six blue dun saddle hackles with a yellowish hue. Tie in and wrap them two at a time from the tail to the head. The hackle fibers should get progressively longer as you approach the head, to produce a taper throughout.
Head: Add three more of the same colored hackles to make a full head. Finish with peacock herl rather full.

#8. “BEAUTIFUL SPECIMEN OF A GAUDY FLY”

Tag: Gold tinsel.
Butt: Peacock herl.
Body: Yellow, blue and orange silk in equal parts with a butt of peacock herl and two cock of the rock crest feathers as veilings above and below each joint (Popham-style). Note: Blacker's hand-colored engraving of the fly shows what appears to be Indian crow as the body veilings even though the text calls for cock of the rock.
Ribs: Three turns of fine oval gold tinsel on each section.
Throat: Jay.
Wings: Orange, yellow and blue macaw body-feather strips using three strips of each (or dyed swan); teal, bustard, a strip of golden pheasant tippet, silver pheasant tail and golden pheasant tail (the barred side feathers) at top with a topping over all.
Horns: Blue and yellow macaw.
Head: Peacock herl.

#9. “ANOTHER GREAT BEAUTY”

Tag: Gold tinsel and yellow-green silk.
Tail: A topping.
Butt: Black ostrich herl.
Body: A tag of blue silk (same size as normal tag); the rest of claret silk.
Ribs: Flat gold tinsel.
Hackle: Claret.
Throat: Jay.
Wings: A pair of jungle cock reaching to the bend of hook; over these a pair of golden pheasant tippets with two long strips of summer duck on either side to reach to the end of the jungle cock. A topping over all.
Head: Black herl.

#10. "A FAMOUS HIGH WATER FLY"

Tag: Silver tinsel and yellow silk.
Tail: Two toppings.
Body: Golden yellow pig's wool or mohair.
Ribs: Oval silver tinsel.
Hackle: Two golden yellow badger hackles from tail.

Throat: Jay.
Wings: Golden pheasant tippets back to back with fairly broad strips of scarlet macaw tail below and peacock wing above the macaw. The macaw should be longer than all the other feathers.
Head: Black herl.

#11. (unnamed)

Tag: Gold tinsel.
Tail: A topping.
Body: Yellow and purple pig's wool or mohair in equal sections.
Ribs: Double-fine gold oval tinsel.
Hackle: Black heron over the purple.
Wings: A few fibers of each of the following: black-andwhite spotted bustard rump, teal, summer duck, silver pheasant hen tail, silver cock pheasant black-and-white spotted tail (Blacker's description), golden pheasant tippet fibers, golden pheasant sword and a topping over all.
Sides: Jungle cock.
Head: Black.

#12. "A LARGE SPRING FLY"

Tag: Gold tinsel and blue and orange silk.
Tail: A topping and golden pheasant sword fibers.
Butt: Black ostrich herl.
Body: 1/4 of yellow mohair with the remainder of puce silk.
Ribs: Two turns of fine oval gold tinsel over the yellow and flat gold tinsel with oval silver tinsel over the silk (five turns).
Hackle: Yellow over the yellow mohair and dark claret over the silk.
Throat: Yellow macaw body feather.
Wings: Underwing of scarlet macaw body feather that has a tip of blue and green; argus pheasant, golden pheasant tail and peacock wing married together as a side veiling to the underwings; scarlet and blue macaw and more peacock wing married together and tied in along the top of the wings with short golden pheasant tippet fibers at the head in front.
Horns: Blue and yellow macaw.
Head: Black.

#13. "THE BALLYSHANNON

Tag: Puce silk.
Tail: A topping and ibis.
Body: Yellow-brown mohair.
Ribs: Oval silver tinsel.
Hackle: Yellow.
Throat: Scarlet hackle around the head tied on as a collar after tying in the wing, sides and horns.
Wings: Four toppings with wide summer duck over these (tie them in like you would tippet underwings); golden pheasant tail and tippet fibers at the sides like veilings; a strip of white-tipped turkey tail and Gallina with hen Himalayan pheasant tail with Himalayan pheasant crest over all like the usual topping (Amherst pheasant topping).
Sides: Kingfisher.
Horns: Scarlet macaw.
Head: Black herl.

#14. "KILLARNEY AND TAY”

Tag: Silver tinsel.
Tail: Summer duck.
Butt: Black ostrich herl.
Body: Brown mohair.
Ribs: Oval silver tinsel.
Hackle: Red-brown spotted grouse.
Wings: Mallard, brown turkey and hen pheasant tail.
Horns: Blue and yellow macaw.
Head: Black.

Note: The tag, butt, ribs and horns are not actually listed in Blacker's description, but were deduced from the handcolored engraving accompanying the text.

#15. "THE MCPHERSON (FOR SPEY) "

Tail: Toucan.
Butt: Black herl.
Body: Yellow silk.
Ribs: Gold oval tinsel.
Hackle: Red from the butt.
Throat: Jay.
Wings: Golden pheasant tail (side feathers), scarlet macaw, peacock wing and dark mottled turkey.
Horns: Blue and yellow macaw.
Head: Black.

Note: In Blacker's description of this fly, no ingredients for the wings were listed other than a "neat, gaudily mixed wing." Later in the text he does suggest using predominantly red colors. The above mixing is my own, but you can, of course, use your imagination for your own result.

THE QUALITY OF THE PRODUCT

By Tom Juracek
Aurora, Colorado

As I walked into the fly shop, a frame located upon the far wall caught my eye. I walked over to view it. As a dresser of salmon flies, I am always interested in seeing flies by other dressers.

I was a little disappointed in what I found. Close examination revealed the fly to be poorly dressed. An attempt had been made to have the tail and topping meet, but had failed miserably. The tag and body, composed of floss, bore a close resemblance to a washboard. The tinsel came close to being precisely wrapped up the body, and the throat hackle was acceptable. The wings looked okay, but I was not real impressed. The head, my gawd, was made of fur, and for a second I thought an entire beaver pelt had been tied on the hook.

Always curious to see at what value other dressers assess their work, I glanced at the price. The tag read in triple figures. I was dazed and confused.

What does the potential purchaser of a salmon fly expect in the way of a product? At $100 or more for a fly, do they expect to find toucan, chatterer, and crow? If the price is $50 do the expectations remain the same? After all, at $50 the price is roughly 30.30303 times the price of an average trout fly. What about a price of $200? More?

Further, exactly how educated will the potential purchaser be as regards salmon flies? Can they tell the difference between a good one and a poor one? What responsibility (if any) lies with the dresser for making certain the product is priced according to the quality of the dressing? If a fly has bustard and seal fur in the dressing, does it automatically qualify for the $150 price range, even if it looks like a buffalo chip? Conversely, if the fly uses turkey and African goat is it automatically consigned to the $1.50 bin?I can answer some of these questions. I believe that the dresser owes the marketplace considerable responsibility concerning the quality of the product. Placing a few toucan feathers over some yellow floss and calling it a Jock Scott just does not cut it. It may be true that many people do not know the characteristics of a well-dressed salmon fly, but that does not absolve the dresser of responsibility. If the price is to be $100, it had better be a fly that has been dressed to perfection, not one that merely utilizes (read wastes) rare materials.

Real materials, in and of themselves, do not make a salmon fly. I do not believe that one out of a thousand buyers of salmon flies can tell chatterer from kingfisher. In fact, I would be surprised if more than 50% of dressers could distinguish chatterer from several of the available substitutes. When I dress a fly, do I use a substitute for chatterer? No way. I use the genuine article: kingfisher. Kingfisher was in vogue long before chatterer became available as a substitute for kingfisher. There are toucan substitutes that can only be told from the real thing by the most expert of experts.

But, does the use of nonregulation materials condemn the fly to being a lower form of life than a fly tied with regulation materials? I don't think so. A fly tied with turkey, rayon, goat, pheasant, mylar, and chicken, sprinkled with a bit of golden pheasant, can be a salmon fly. In fact, it could hold its head proudly above some of its brethren who, although they may contain some embellishments, clearly resemble a wounded duck.

I could continue, but I elect not to do so. I leave it up to the readers of this publication. You do not even have to dress salmon flies to have an answer to some of these questions. All you need is an opinion.

ATTENTION!

Only Elitists Need Apply

by The High Wizard of Usk

A friend who attended the 1991 salmon-fly conference at West Yellowstone told me that the term "elitist" was used to describe some members of The Salmon Flyer. Nothing could be further from the truth. The dictionary defines elite as "the choice or most carefully selected part of a group, as of a society or profession." Do some members of The Salmon Flyer fit this definition like a glove? Read on – please.

The following is a brief history of the The Flyer taken from Wayne Luallen's article "The Group – Who, What and Why."

The first redd was perhaps dug in October, 1985 as ideas were exchanged between tiers. In the fall of 1986, a group of salmon-fly tiers got together in Portland, Oregon. They didn't want to be a formal organization, but wanted to exchange ideas as friends. This group decided to meet again at West Yellowstone in 1987. At that meeting the possibility of a bulletin was considered and seriously discussed for the first time. However, it was not until the 1988 meeting in Livingston, Montana, that The Group (the original name of The Salmon Flyer) really came into existence.

Now, just what are the requirements one has to meet to receive this "elite" publication? First of all, you have to meet the high financial burden of $5.00. This immediately eliminates most of the undesirables. Finally, in this long list of rules, The Salmon Flyer requires one written contribution of some sort per year. This is the nail in the coffin to assure the purity of our membership.

Question: Contributing to The Flyer once a year is vastly more difficult than paying the $5.00? True or false? Answer: False.

Does this surprise you? If it does, you have the wrong impression of what The Flyer is all about. How so, you ask? Let me explain.

First of all, what you contribute to The Salmon Flyer in written form only need deal with Atlantic salmon tying subjects (loosely interpreted). There are no requirements for length or originality. Your topic needn't be original to have a profound affect on salmon-fly tying for years to come.

There are a million stories out there just waiting to be published in The Flyer. So how do you find them? Sit! Sit at your tying desk and grab something off the desk. Now tell us what you don't know about it, then what you do know about it, and what might be the potential use of the object. There, now you have something for The Flyer, it's that simple.

I happen to have grabbed a pumice stone. My contribution to The Flyer on this pumice stone would tell you why I bought it (cost and where), application, durability, substitutes, recommendations, etc. Now, if I thought a pumice stone article was worthless, it just might have brought some other article to mind, such as fingernail filing boards, silk gloves, silk floss, rayon floss . . .

What if someone wrote something that gave you an idea? Fine, send it in even if it is similar or just shows an alternative. Did you see something in the paper, or an article, or a book you thought would interest other members? We'll never know unless you tell us. Feel free to write something outrageous, or controversial, or go spacey on us.

Don't worry about what those "elite" members are going to think, don't worry about them trashing you ideas. Take my word, it ain't gonna happen.

I'll take three minutes to come up with some article ideas: What is it like to be a beginner (helpless), sources I buy from, how to solve a problem of technique, guinea feathers, skin vs. neck vs. strung hackle, storage containers, whip finish vs. hand, my favorite fly (book, tier, source, etc.), most difficult fly to tie, McNeese, The Salmon Flyer--why it hasn't won a Pulitzer, tinsels, proportions, style, cements and thinners, Andy Rooney and the cost of materials, authentic vs. substitutes, take a gamble, learning from failure, threads, vises. Time! My three minutes are up.

Only one article per year is required, but go right ahead and submit as many as you would like. Too much copy is a problem we will just have to live with.

That's it. If The Flyer still sounds like an elite group to you, so be it. Like tying a Captain, I can eventually get use to the term.

The Salmon Flyer
Vol. 4 - No.2, Spring, 1992

WING DESIGN

by Tom Juracek
Aurora, Colorado

Salmon-fly tiers often find the greatest room for creative expression during the construction of the wings. As a rule, tiers faithfully follow the recipe for a fly until it comes time to design the wing. Most tiers, for example, would never consider changing the order of materials called for in the body of a Butcher. But in designing the wings, the order of materials listed in the dressing may well be flung out the window--freedom of choice reigns.

Certain elements should be taken into account while designing the wing of a fly. These elements include the color selection for wing materials, the quantity of color versus the quantity of "browns," location of each type of feather, wing style and overall silhouette, and type of material to be employed in the wings.

In reaching these decisions, the first consideration should be the overall wing style. Are strips of material going to be employed? Is the wing going to be a true "mixed" wing in the Kelson style? Is the wing going to fall somewhere between these two styles, with some materials utilized as strips and others as individual strands? If a predetermination of the overall style cannot be reached, start the wing as strips and slowly remix the materials once the wing has been assembled. For example, the recipe for a wing may call for white, yellow, and light green swan, bustard and golden pheasant. After marrying the materials in the order listed, you notice that the separation of color between the white and yellow strips is not clearly noticeable. Placing one strand of bustard (a highly visible and distinctive feather) between the white and yellow strips may help offset the washing together of the two light materials. In order to develop a pattern to the wing, you might consider placing another strand of the bustard between the yellow and light green strips. The result is an arrangement that outlines the color strips with a strand of the dark bustard, allowing each color to stand on its own.

The amount of each color in a wing is partly determined by the wing materials called for in the pattern. Pryce-Tannatt tends to call for more color in the wing of flies than does Kelson. Make an estimate of the number of strands required to wing the fly in the style you are tying. For this and following examples, let's assume that twenty strands are required. The wing materials previously listed are going to be tied over a silver-tinsel body with a badger hackle up. How much color to use? In this fly, perhaps ten strands of wing should be color strips and ten strands of neutral colors. Should the colored strands each be given equal space? My suggestion would be not to do so. Yellow will be the most distinctive of the three colored materials and therefore probably requires the fewest strands. The white section is the only portion that closely resembles the body and hackle work. This should be taken into account by placing perhaps four of these strands in the wing. The green section will tend to provide a highlight to the wing, but will quickly wash out against the other materials. Again I would suggest four strands.

Bustard is expensive and most tiers like to use the fewest possible strands per fly. Let's try using only three, leaving the wing with seven strands of golden pheasant.

One of the better ways of putting a wing together is to mirror the body. Colors appearing at the rear of the body are placed lowest in the wing. As you go from the bottom to the top of the wing, you encounter

colors in the same order as they appear from the rear to the front on the body. In our example, this is not an option since the body is simply tinsel. However, we can somewhat try to mirror the body with the white section and some bustard. Keeping the white section lowest in the wing and placing two strands of bustard over will to a degree mirror the badger hackle used in the body. The next section should be colored with either the yellow or the green. Let's go with the green. Place the remaining bustard strand above the green, marry in the yellow, and place the golden pheasant section above everything. The yellow strip should blend nicely with the brown/black of the golden pheasant.

Placing the golden pheasant at the top of the wing accomplishes three tasks. First, in my experience, golden pheasant deployed in locations other than the top of the wing can lead to winging difficulties, as it does not marry particularly well. Second, the brown-black golden pheasant provides a dark background as a foil to enhance the look of the lightly colored topping. Finally, if shoulders are called for on the fly, the golden pheasant serves as a good location for their placement. And here again, the dark background helps to highlight the materials. Further, because we have used a lot of golden pheasant in our wing, the shoulders will help reduce the dominance of the golden pheasant in the finished fly.

We can also lessen the predominance of golden pheasant by placing a broad strip of mallard on the fly as a roof. If we select an appropriate section of the feather, we should be able to heighten the "silvery" look of the fly. Let's pull the roof section from somewhere near the base of the mallard feather. This should bring into play a feather section with a considerable greyish base. The upper front section will thus be kept a consistent color with the remainder of the fly.

Experiment with each wing you place on a fly. Remember that there is often a side benefit from all the experimental mixing, marrying, and remarrying of feathers: You get a stronger wing than one that has been married only once.

Be bold in your design. Don't be disappointed in the look of a wing when it is first placed upon the hook. There are often many more materials to be tied in. Think about your placement of materials. For example, what would be the point of using bustard as the upper section of a wing that has a large roof, shoulders and two toppings? The bustard will be buried. Use a substitute, or place the bustard low in the wing where it will be seen. If you are pleased with the look of the wing, don't dicker with a winner; keep the remaining materials to a minimum.

SALMON FLY STORAGE

by David McCullough
Holland, Pennsylvania

The storage of salmon flies is an important issue. All tiers and collectors who expect their collections to remain in good shape must understand that once a salmon fly leaves the vise it immediately becomes subject to deterioration.

When I first started collecting salmon flies, I framed and hung every one of them. Unfortunately, the room had high humidity and the affect on the flies was disheartening: Most of the wings and all of the crests twisted to one side or the other. I attempted to correct this problem by removing the flies from the frames and lying them on their sides for several months. I then stored the flies in Riker mounts (butterfly specimen boxes) for protection. Once mounted, I found that steaming the glass front of the boxes with a tea kettle helped some of the distorted flies.

Riker mounts are attractive but they have their drawbacks. After several months your flies will be squashed, as the mount's glass lies directly on the flies. Those lovely tent-shaped wings will be folded flat as a piece of paper. Another problem is that the filler material can snag and pull at the fly when it is being removed from the box.

Mark Waslick shared with me another method and I feel it is the best alternative: Store the flies in clear plastic boxes, like the kind sold at baseball-card shops. The boxes come in a variety of sizes and have several advantages. By fastening a small cork cylinder in the box to accept the point of the hook, you have a protected display that can be viewed from all sides. The box can be signed with a gold or silver Magic Marker, and pertinent information can be noted on the side of the box. Lastly, the price is right and the boxes are readily available.

I store full-dress salmon flies in as shallow a box as possible, letting the sides of the box support the wings. Deeper boxes work well for Spey flies by providing room for the hackle to breathe.

DRESSINGS

The Drum Flies

The following dressings were sent to Tom Pawluk by Alex Simpson. Tom sent them to Wayne Luallen, noting that the Drum flies were "originated by and first tied by Sandy Irvine--Lord Alexander Irvine, Laird of Drum Castle and Drum Estate--about 1930. I do not believe the dressings have ever been printed in any publication." Thanks to Tom, Alex, and Wayne, the Salmon Flyer has its first scoop.

DRUM RANGER

Tag: Oval gold and crimson floss
Tail: Topping, summer duck and blue chatterer
Butt: Black ostrich
Body: White floss, rib flat and oval gold
Throat: Golden brown
Wings: Two projecting jungle cock enveloped by two tippets, summer duck covering lower parts of tippets, cheeks blue chatterer, topping over all

DRUM SILVER BLUE

Tag: Oval silver
Tail: Topping
Butt: Black ostrich
Body: Flat silver, rib oval silver
Throat: Blue guinea fowl and vulturine guinea fowl
Wings: Blue swan covered by spotted vulturine guinea fowl

DRUM SUNSET

Tag: Oval gold
Tail: Topping and small jungle cock
Butt: Black ostrich
Body: Red floss, rib flat and oval gold
Throat: Long black heron
Wing: Golden pheasant swords, sides jungle cock, cheeks jungle cock, topping over all. The sides of jungle cock overlapping 1/2 way up the sword feathers.

DRUM TOUCAN

Tag: Oval silver
Tail: Four toucan feathers
Body: 1/3 black wool, rib flat gold and oval silver, 1/3 blue floss, 1/3 white floss
Hackle: Blue guinea fowl
Throat: Orange
Wings: Double brown turkey

DRUM JAY

Tag: Oval silver
Tail: Topping
Butt: Black ostrich
Body: Flat silver
Throat: Blue
Wings: Yellow swan, cheeks jay, the yellow to appear above the jay

DRUM LIGHTNING

Tag: Oval gold and yellow floss
Tail: Topping and Indian crow
Butt: Black ostrich
Body: 1/2 black floss, 1/2 flat gold with rib oval gold
Hackle: Orange over flat gold
Throat: Vulturine guinea fowl
Wings: Mallard, strip of barred summer duck, sides jungle cock, cheeks Indian crow, topping over all
Head: Orange

DRUM MIST

Tail: Topping
Body: White wool, rib reverse oval silver and heavy black thread; and ordinary rib with oval gold and red thread
Throat: Long black heron
Wings: White swan with short jungle cock cheeks Head: Red

DRUM MOONSHINE

Tag: Oval gold
Tail: Topping and blue chatterer
Butt: Black ostrich
Body: 1/2 white floss, rib oval gold; 1/2 black floss, rib oval silver
Throat: Blue
Wings: Cinnamon turkey, white swan, cheeks small jungle cock, topping over all

DRUM PHEASANT

Tail: Tippets
Butt: Black ostrich
Body: Red floss, rib flat and oval silver Hackle: Tippet from second turn of tinsel
Throat: Tippet
Wings: Black-and-white turkey

DRUM CHARM

Tag: Oval silver
Tail: Topping, summer duck fibers, and blue chatterer
Butt: Black ostrich
Body: Black floss, rib oval silver and bright blue thread running on either side
Throat: Blue
Wings: Blue swan, white swan, and pintail, veiled with

DRUM EAGLE

Tag: Oval silver
Tail: Topping and summer duck Butt: Black ostrich
Body: Oval silver
Hackle: Yellow-dyed eagle Throat: Teal
Wings: Golden pheasant sword point, Amherst pheasant, sides jungle cock, cheeks blue chatterer, topping over all

DRUM GROUSE

Tag: Oval silver
Tail: Topping
Butt: Black ostrich
Body: Black floss, rib oval silver
Throat: Guinea fowl
Wings: Gray turkey, summer duck, cheeks small jungle cock

Tag: Oval silver
Tail: Topping
Butt: Black ostrich
Body: Pink floss, rib oval silver and reverse ribbed blue thread from far side and near side Throat: Long gray heron
Wings: Two strips cinnamon turkey, bustard, bronze mallard (the bustard showing)

REVIEWS

Classic Salmon Flies

By Mikael Frodin

Reviewed by Bob Arnold
Seattle, Washington

I find this an extremely useful book to tie from, since a number of original sources are brought together in a knowledgable manner. The dust jacket says it lists 165 fully dressed flies, but it gives way more than those, since each entry includes several related patterns, some variations but others distinct. For example, under The Silver Grey (a favorite of mine), is given the original pattern (James Wright), a historical summary, Blacker's dressing from 1855, the J.J. Hardy and J.H. Hale distinguishing wings, and a comparison with the slight variation according to Mr. Kelson. Then Frodin gives the Pryce-Tannatt dressing that is often repeated in modern books.

Without Frodin, one would have to own copies of about six different books, most of which are out of print and very expensive, if ever located. Having the dressings all together and at hand, when one sits down at the vise, makes it possible to tie any and all versions, and do so correctly. What I have said about Silver Grey is true about most all other patterns listed; instead of 165, there are five or six hundred dressings included in the book, which makes it a considerable bargain.

Additionally, there are the photos. Frodin is a fine tier and has used only original materials. He has included, in color, drawings from Blacker, Mr. Kelson, etc., which are invaluable. The photography can be faulted, though only slightly. The colors tend to become muddy due to lack of frontal lighting. Still, most are good enough to sort out materials, colors, and proportions. Index and cross-references in the text are very helpful. After Jorgensen, this is probably the next book I would recommend to a beginner at this complex craft of ours.

Steelhead Fly Fishing

By Trey Combs

Reviewed by Bob Arnold
Seattle, Washington

Combs has done it again, only bigger and better than the two previous times, which makes him probably the authority on this game fish, in much the same manner as Lee Wulff is on the Atlantic salmon. Combs shares expertise in the field, however, with a large number of accomplished anglers, who are listed according to their home rivers. It is an omnibus edition, a veritable encyclopedia on the fish, and includes as in the past hundreds of fly patterns (many of which are headed, I suspect, for the graveyard). All the important ones are here.

Atlantic salmon flies and steelhead flies have long shared common ground. Those of us who love both have caught steelhead on traditional salmon-fly patterns and vice versa. The hair-winged flies probably come closest to the overlap. For example, I could happily fish Black Bear, Green Butt, or Black Bear, Red Butt, and not lose any effectiveness with steelhead. Similarly, I'll bet salmon fishers could tie and use our popular maribou streamers and knock them dead (as similar flies did big brookies on the Nipigon, before they were outlawed because of their effectiveness). And our traditional hair wings would catch Atlantics, too.

The biggest area of cross-fertilization, however, is the Spey fly. It has long fascinated West Coast tiers because of its streamy, slender shape and quick entry and sinking abilities. The color fly plates of Spey-type flies in Comb's book are impressive and instructive. Here is fine work by Bob Veverka, Steve Gobin, Dave McNeese, and Mike Kinney. John Farrar's Speys are outstanding. Joe Howell from the North Umpqua is represented with some handsome ties. Pat Crane, best known as Syd Glasso's friend and a fisher who continues tying Syd's patterns, is included. But for ties I could happily fish with because they are so fishy, give me Gobin, Farrar, and Kinney.

What the book says, most of all, is that it is a small world, a global fly-tying village as it were, and steelhead and Atlantics are not so different as today's fish biologists would make them out to be, with their new genus classifications, Salmo and Oncorhynchus. They are fished for much the same way and respond to a wide range of patterns tied internationally to meet only the angler's exacting expectations.

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CROCK-POT DYEING

by Steve Gobin
Marysville, Washington

I became interested in dyeing feathers about fifteen years ago, prompted by the glaring absence of good solid colors at the local fly shop. Dyeing feathers was a closely guarded secret back then, known only to a select few. What information was available amounted to putting some feathers in some water with vinegar and dye to get some pretty halfassed results. People getting good results behaved like persecuted alchemists: highly secretive and suspicious of people asking too many questions.

I plodded along with the masses for a several years, learning by trial and error, with more bad results than good. Then my wife Karen, who has always been alert for goodies and toys that might interest me, found a hand-weavering shop that sold wool, silks and dyes (both acidic and natural). More importantly, they carried a small selection of books which went into considerable detail regarding dyeing techniques.

I soon became familiar with various dye classifications. Some dyes are designed to work on synthetic materials while some are intended to work on animal fibers. Rit and Veniard dyes may be okay, but there are better dyes available through Cerulean Blue, Ltd. (P.O. Box 5126, Seattle, WA 98105.) You will be amazed at the quality of these dyes, especially in the brighter colors.

When we dye feathers, a chemical reaction takes place between the feathers and the dye suspension, wherein an acid causes the dye to be affixed to the fiber. When we apply heat, the process is accelerated, resulting in a permanent bond. With the application of heat, the acid--in this case vinegar--assumes a positive charge, while the fiber becomes negative. In an effort to equalize itself, the sulfur bridges connecting the individual molecules are broken down by the acid and replaced with a molecule of dye (good dyes bond at this molecular level). Natural dye stuffs, as a rule, do not use acids but rather employ a chemical, often mineral salt, that combine with the dye to form an insoluble compound. Colors can be varied by using different mineral salts.

In exhaust dyeing, the dyeing process continues until the acid or the dye is completely exhausted in the bath, or if the bath itself evaporates. Unfortunately, when using the stovetop dyeing method, the amount of heat we can apply at a constant level is limited. If the burner is left on to exhaust the bath, the fiber will be scorched and ruined.

Which brings us to the point of this article--the dyeing vessel. Your container should have ample room to prevent the crowding of feathers, it should be easy to clean so you don't require different pots for every color, and it should be made of a material that won't affect the final color. Aluminum cookware, while serviceable and cheap, leach mineral salts into the bath that will ultimately affect the color. Stainless cookware works well, but we are still faced with the problem of heat loss, and it is also very expensive. For years now I have been using a cast-off selection of Revere Ware provided by my mother.

The only way to solve the problem of heat loss is to heat the bath, turn off the burner and immerse the feathers until the bath cools, remove the feathers, reheat the bath, and start over. This is a messy procedure, and you can never completely exhaust the bath, just yourself. I end up with the dye all over

the counter, floor and in places you couldn't imagine. This has the unhappy result of making me very unpopular with the establishment, not to mention it is a general pain in the butt.

My dyeing is done in the family kitchen. I have to plan things in advance so as not to inconvenience my family. I find it disturbing to have the kids making sandwiches around the dye powder. Since all of this was hard to manage and I inevitably made quite a mess, I found myself doing less and less dyeing. There had to be a better way.

Browsing through Fred Myers during the Christmas holiday, I took a look at the crock-pots. I had been playing with this idea for some time and decided to splurge and buy one. It has proven to be the answer to most of my problems. Earthenware dyeing vessels are ideal--they don't leach metal salts, clean easily, and retain heat for a long time. Best of all, they come equipped with a controlled, nonspecific heat source that is perfect for dyeing.

This method is considerably slower than the stovetop method, but its advantages far outweigh the extra time involved. In particular, this method totally exhausts the dye bath, and deep, rich shades will reward your patience. Even pastel shades are evenly distributed on the fiber with none of the original shade in evidence. By exhausting the bath, the bond will be permanent and there is very little rinsing.

Here is a brief summary of the dyeing process.

1) Prepare your feathers ahead of time. I like to soak them overnight in a solution of Dawn dish soap and water. Use hot water to insure thorough permeation.

2) Fill the crock pot 3/4 full and turn it on to the low setting. Add 1/2 cup vinegar for every 4 quarts of water. Prepare the dye by mixing 1/4 tsp. in a cup of water, heat to dissolve the dye, and add this to the crock pot and cover.

3) Thoroughly rinse your feathers (and I mean thoroughly) as any soap residue will neutralize the acid, resulting in a blotchy dye job. When you are sure they are clear, immerse them in the bath, making sure that they are evenly distributed.

4) Cover the pot and brew at a low setting for three or four hours or until the bath starts to clear. Be sure to occasionally stir the bath to mix the acid and dye or you will get uneven results.

5) Turn off the heat and allow the bath to cool. Avoid rinsing feathers from a bath that is still hot. This will shock the fiber and lead to brittleness and dye loss.

6) Rinse in luke-warm water, dry, and steam back into shape.

Some words of advice: Use extra vinegar to allow for complete exhaustion. Buy a 5-quart crock-pot with a removable container. Allow more time for dark colors and for mixed shades, as various colors strike the feather at different rates. You can be deceived into thinking that your dye job was a failure, when all you needed was to let it soak for more time. Keep careful notes, describing dyeing strength, how much acid used, time in bath, and the type of detergent used. Pin a sample from each bath to your notes to keep track of your success and failure rate--some of my failures have been very interesting.

Last of all, let me stress that dyes should be considered as toxic chemicals and treated as such. Clean up after yourself and be aware that dye powder will drift from open containers to land on any flat surface. Take care to clean these areas completely. The dye bath must be neutralized with baking soda to bring the ph to a base. Otherwise, you run the risk of dissolving the cement in your sewage system. If you don't take the time to do this, the bath will do it for you by using the cement as a neutralizing agent.

Good luck. Hopefully someone out there will find this information of help. Now if someone could tell me how to dye ostrich without ruining it, I would be a happy fella, indeed.

TWO TIPS

By John Alevras
Littleton, Colorado

STRIPPED HACKLE

There are times when a doubled body hackle creates more bulk than the tier wants, and a hackle stripped on one side creates the desired effect. This is true when tying Spey flies that have a tendency to fish upside down because of too much hackle.

The problem in stripping a hackle, however, particularly dyed hackle in dark colors, is that when the hackle is removed the natural color of the stem shows--usually white. This generally does not present a problem when the hackle is being applied to a dubbed body, but when a stripped hackle is being wrapped over a floss or tinsel body the lighter color of the stem will show and detract from the perfection we are seeking.

A fairly simple solution to the problem is the use of felt-tip pens. By matching a felt tip to the color of the hackle and carefully marking over the exposed stem, the contrasting lighter color is eliminated. There is such a wide range of colors and tones now available in felt-tip pens at art and craft stores that there is no problem in matching the hackle.

FINGER PREPARATION

Your Black Ranger is progressing beautifully. The back end is perfect, the tinsels are secured, the hackle doubled and attached, when a rough thumb frays the floss.

Every tier has experienced it and everyone has searched for the solution to smooth fingers. Some have found satisfaction with gloves (Wayne Luallen uses silk gloves); I have not. My solution: a combination of pumice stone and a skin lotion by the name of Aquaphor.

The pumice stone is designed primarily for smoothing callused feet. The stone is quite rough and appears to be too coarse to bring about smooth fingers until you experience how beautifully it works. For years I used fingernail files, believing a smooth finish on skin required the same fine sanding that wood requires. This is not the case. The pumice stone brings about a very smooth finish, yet is coarse enough to remove rough spots, particularly by the corner of the fingernail. Moistening the fingers before sanding helps the process.

I then use Aquaphor. Aquaphor (NDC 10356-020-05) contains petrolatum, mineral oil, mineral wax, and wool wax alcohol. It is quite greasy, requires a very limited application, and takes about fifteen minutes of rubbing to fully absorb. I usually apply it about one hour before I intend to tie and at night before going to sleep, simply applying it to the tips of my thumb and index fingers.

Aquaphor is available as either a cream or a gel; I find the gel to be more effective.

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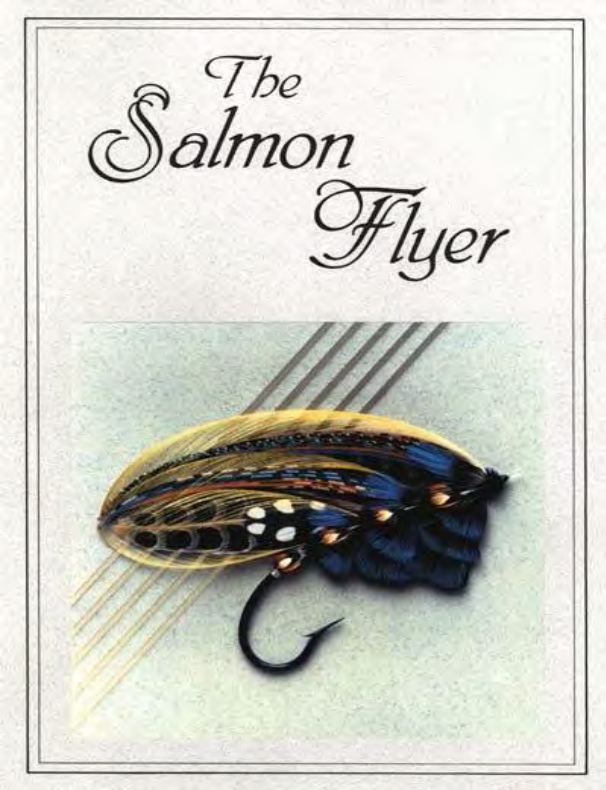
Vol. 4 - No. 4, Autumn, 1992



TYING THE "DALI"

Giraffes on Fire and Telephones

By Mark Waslick

The Salvadore Dali painting titled "Giraffes on Fire and Telephones" began my fascination with the work of this Spanish surrealist after I saw it in a poster in college.

I recall seeing some of his other works before that but none had left quite the impression on me as this painting did with its juxtapositions of imagery. Whenever I would see it or similar works, I would invariably end up just scratching my head and smiling. Along with his fantastic subject matter, there were often hidden or "camouflaged" images. Long before Bev Doolittle began playing hide and seek by concealing bears in trees and pinto ponies in snowscapes, Dali turned elephants into swans, nudes into furniture and the mundane into religious crucifixions. The veiled imagery, bold subject matter and, at times, playfulness, always held my interest.

After seeing an exhibition of Dali's canvases, sculpture and jewelry in Montreal during a rather "uninspired" period of my fly tying, I became inspired to sketch out ideas for a fly in an attempt to capture the feel of the exhibit. I wanted something different in the fly while still maintaining a classic salmon fly "look".

The body and "hackles" for the fly became a series of multiple veilings. The wing evolved into wings within wings with crests within the wings rather than only as toppings. In addition, I wanted a hook what would exaggerate the shape of classic salmon fly hooks while complementing the mood of the fly.

Eventually., I settled on a version of a sketch of the fly that would later be named "Dali" and began its construction. I made a hook by using a propane torch, vise grips and auto enamel. As I began to tie, I tried to use common materials in different ways such as overlapping peacock crests for veilings instead of the usual hackles and in the wings I staggered the ends of the individual married strips to give a more tapered appearance.

My goal was to capture what I found interesting in Salvadore Dali's work - the feeling that you were seeing something different, the look of a picture within the overall picture and, of course, a bit of amusement. What resulted is what you see. I feel I accomplished what I had hoped for. Since my first sketches of the fly the name "Dali" eventually stuck - even if it seems a bit hokey. I hope you find something of interest somewhere in the fly, but most of all, I hope you smiled when you saw it!

Here is the pattern listing:

"DALI"

Hook: Dali Custom - Heavy iron.
Tag: Fine oval silver tinsel and purple silk; veiled top and bottom with Indian Crow (or a substitute) and along either side with Jungle Cock.
Butt: Black ostrich herl.
Tail: Golden.Pheasant crest.
Body:

First Section:

Body: Purple silk ribbed with fine oval gold tinsel and veiled top and bottom with Indian crow and along the sides with Jungle cock.
Wing: Mearns quail wing coverts (a pair back to back, black spotted) ; Mearns quail breast feathers as sides (white spotted); Blue chatterer as cheeks (or substitute) and a topping reaching to the tail tip.
Keel: A pair of peacock breast feathers back to back.
Joint butt: Black ostrich herl.

Second Section:

Body: As in first section.
Wing: Jungle cock (enamelled brown, wedgeshaped feather) over which is a married wing of the following: (top to bottom, one strand each) Amherst Phesant (A.P.) tail, red Swan, blue Swan, A. P., blue S., A. P., blue S., A.P., orange S., A.P., orange S., A.P.; Chatterer as cheeks.
Keel: Two pairs of peacock crests, back to back.
Joint butt: Black ostrich herl.
Topping: Golden Pheasant crest.

Third Section:

Body: As in previous sections.
Wing: A pair of black spotted Mearns quail feathers over which is a married wing of (again as above) orange Swan, A.P. dyed blue, orange Swan, Bustard, A.P. dyed blue, orange Swan, Bustard, A.P. dyed blue, orange Swan, A.P. dyed blue, two orange Swan strips, two blue Swan strips; Chatterer as cheeks.
Throat: Three pairs of peacock crest feathers.
Topping: Golden Pheasant crest.
Head: Black ostrich herl.
Gut eye: The gut loop is tied in vertically.

Comments: The individual strips in the married wings are staggered so that the bottom edge tapers to the shape of the wing, topping below it.

MARRYING SINGLE FIBERS

by Steven Fernandez

Do you encounter difficulty when marrying single fibers together? If so, this may be due to the cross sectional shape of each individual fiber (oh, sorry Wayne - each BARB). When held, the individual barb wants to flip on it's side, thus making it impossible to marry it with others.

One way to alleviate this problem is to marry wider sections of several barbs together, then strip off the excess with a dubbing needle. The excess can then be remarried to the original feather for future use. The first section you use as a base to marry with should be wide enough itself so it doesn't twist on you.

If you only want a single strand of this particular feather, build up the section as mentioned above, then remove the excess of that particular strip.

It is also easier to get a nice even edge along the tip of the married section when using this technique, rather than by marrying individual strands together. It is easier to align the "lines" along the "point" of a single strand. I also find it simpler to marry new strands to the bottom, rather than to the top of the wing section as I go along.

If you have trouble counting the amount of fibers needed from each quill (oh, sorry again, Wayne - from each rachis, pronounced RAKE - US), try this: turn the feather over so the concave (reverse) side of the feather is facing you. Run a dubbing needle along the fibers where they connect to the rachis, running it toward the butt of the feather. An audible clicking sound will result as the needle hits each fiber (uh, BARB!). This allows you to evenly match as few as one or as many as 3,217 barbs per left and right sections.

OLD GREEN EYES

by Mark Kirchner

I recently purchased by mail order some vintage Spanish silk worm gut leaders and had planned on making twisted gut eyes with this material. When it arrived I was happy with its flexibility but not its color which was a pale green. The color did not complement my work so I set the gut aside for a month or so. Later I decided to try an experiment to bleach the color out. This process returned the gut to its original neutral color without affecting its flexibility. It now makes beautiful twisted eyes.

Here is the procedure: mix a solution of 50% Clorox bleach and 50% cold water in a small stainless pot or tray. Submerge the gut in this solution and stir to obtain an even bleaching action.

With this process the green will be totally removed in about 32 minutes to reveal the gut's original beauty. After soaking the required time rinse the gut very thoroughly in water. I use a combination of rinsing and soaking in still water, this due to California's water rationing situation. Once washed the gut can then be twisted and set out to dry.

I've found that after a year of using this method the first gut eyes I treated are still flexible and luminescent.

My only caution might be to bleach small groups of gut since your material might react differently (it might be a good idea to experiment first with waste ends to determine the amount of soak time necessary - Ed.). I still do not know if the gut will become brittle in five to ten years so I bleach the gut only as needed instead of in large quantities.

SOME THOUGHTS ON SALMON FLY TYING

Anonymous

Why do we tie salmon flies? Is it for the enduring beauty of the finished product? Is it a way to somehow forge a link with a distant but charming past? Do we create these complicated works of feather and silk only to become caught up in the quest for just those feathers and silks? Or is it a way to boost our own egos and say to our fellow tier (not necessarily verbally) "Hey, top this!".

I've been doing a lot of thinking of late after observing salmon fly tiers and how they approach the art and how it sometimes tends to affect them (myself included!). I would like to put forth some of these observations without, I hope, stepping on other fly tiers' toes in the process. If I do offend a few of you, I am sorry -- that is not my intention.

Fly tiers in general are a pretty interesting group of individuals. They tend to be very focused, particular about how they do what they do, extremely patient (not surprisingly) and are pretty much laidback, friendly and affable. But there is one group of tiers that seems to me to take their interest a little too seriously -- salmon fly tiers.

I've noticed in the three years since I began tying salmon flies in earnest that many of us who pursue this particular discipline seem to develop a distressing case of "myfliesarebetterthanyoursitis" after

reaching a certain skill level. There also is a noticeable desire by a lot of tiers to put forth the notion that their way of doing a particular step is the one and only way. Poppycock!!

What I really want to say in this essay is that there is no right way and no wrong way to tie a fly, there is only your way to tie our fly and that it works perfectly well for you. It is totally unimportant whether or not another tier builds his or her flies using techniques that may seem "wrong" or "odd" to others. If it sounds like I'm preaching, I apologize, but I think at times we, myself included, forget the real reason for tying these flies in the first place, the simple and absolute enjoyment of applying feathers, silk and tinsel to a hook!

Whether or not we consider ourselves better than the next person at tying flies is totally beside the point because if we do think this way, I believe, we tend to convey to others an unnecessary "tension" about our interest. By saying to ourselves "this Jock Scott is the best that has ever been tied" we may seem to set ourselves up as the "expert" where there are no true experts, only very good fly tiers who are very good at tying flies their particular way.

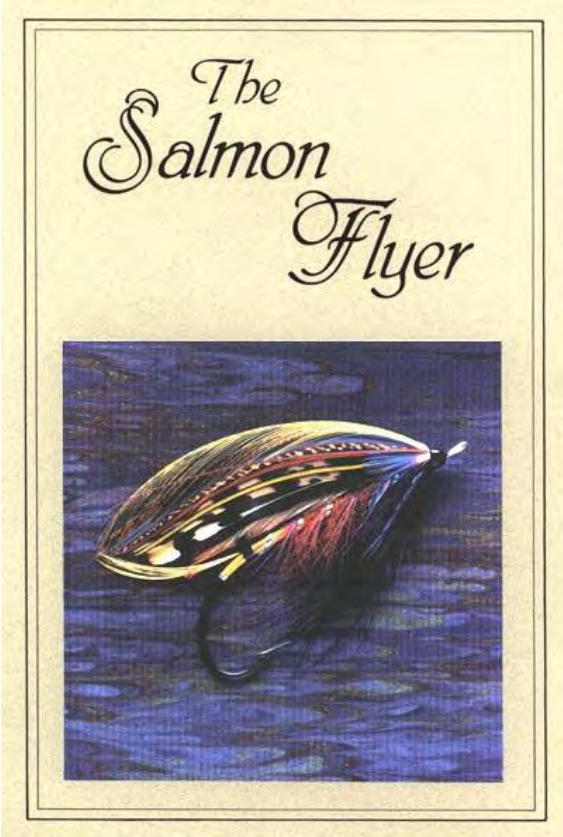
There is a fly tier I know quite well on the East who chooses not to be a subscriber to this newsletter simply because he feels that West Coast tiers deserve no particular merit and who tie flies in a way that is not acceptable to his own view of what is the "right way". This is precisely what I find to be a sad point of view. The tier in question has no desire to learn from others - only to criticize what others are doing. Think about it! Again, there is only one reason to tie salmon flies and that is for the pure enjoyment of it!

A tapered body or one that is of uniform thickness - which is better? "Neither and both! A high, fat wing or a low, sleek wing -- which is better? Again, neither and both. To use Chinese silk or Japanese silk - which is better? Neither and both! This is the essence of what I'm getting at. Whether we tie only Classic patterns or only our own "new" creations ie not arguable in my view -- for one to say that a tier w`ro only works with the tried and true Jock Scotts or Pophams has no creativity is, again, missing the: point -- just like the person who says its valid only to tie the classics exactly the way they were tied "authentically" is missing the joy of creativity.

Another important faction of tiers to be concerned with are those who insist on using only "authentic" materials and who will stop at nothing to obtain them. Believe me, I have succumbed to the lure of the "classic" materials and have gone through my own gyrations to try and obtain even a few of the exotic feathers. But are these exotics really necessary to the core reason for tying salmon flies in the first place? Is it responsible for us to possibly contribute to the demise of a species just to put a few feathers on a hook when a substitute might work just as well?

I know, I know, you've heard this argument before but I really believe we should still stop to think about our motives and consider alternatives to the rarer materials. I will say, though, that I have no problem with obtaining materials from exotic species that have been captive-bred in this country. The exotic bird breeders are not only pursuing a legitimate hobby but have, in many cases, replenished the populations of endangered species by breeding them in a controlled, predator-free environment. If a breeder were to offer me a dead bird for a small fee, I would not hesitate (as long as I did not break any laws pertaining to the possession of rare or endangered species).

Enough of this tirade! Again, I sincerely hope I did not "ruffle any feathers" or "raise any hackles" with this. I just hate to see myself and my fellow tiers take our interest in salmon flies too seriously to really enjoy sharing the flies and our methods of tying them with each other.



MCINTYRE
Dressed by Wayne Luallen

LOVE THEM RIBBIES!

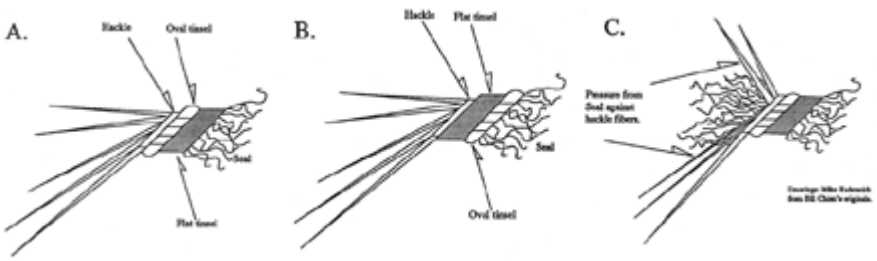
(From the book - Difficult Partnerships)

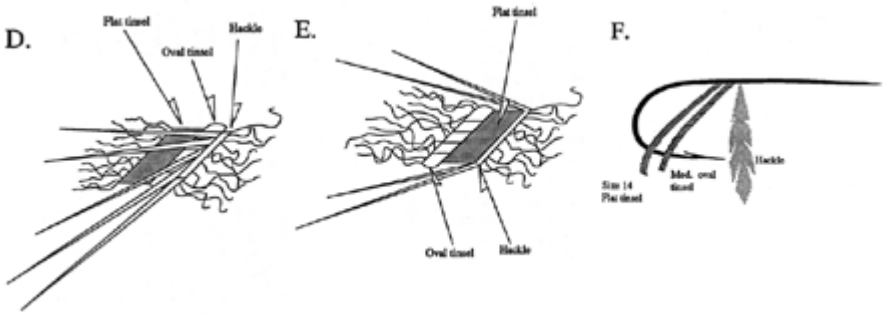
by William Chinn

The standard way of ribbing and hackling the body of a salmon fly is hackle, oval tinsel, flat tinsel (see Dia. A).

I have a postcard of an antique Durham Ranger wherein the tyer used a different sequence than the above described. He tied in the hackle followed by the flat tinsel followed finally by the oval tinsel (Dia. B).

This started me thinking. I wondered if there might not be a better way to accomplish this ribbing and hackling. When a salmon fly has a seal body, I have always felt that the seal actually hindered the body hackle by pushing against it from the left due to the "shoulder" it created (Dia. C)





I experimented a bit by tying a spey fly with a seal body. I tied in a flat tinsel, then an oval tinsel followed lastly by the body hackle. This was done to lessen the influence of the seal by keeping it as far as possible from the left side of the hackle. The pressure, if any, from the seal is now from the right of the hackle.

The hackle now has an easier time when you try to sweep it back against the fly's body. Are you ready? Yep - see Dia. D.

Another method of ribbing a seal body is: oval tinsel, flat tinsel and lastly, on the right, the body hackle. I tied a full-dressed fly using this sequence and it worked well. Do I even have to say this? See Dia. E.

Now, some of you might be thinking "how come the sequence - flat tinsel, body hackle, oval tinsel - isn't mentioned? Try it, you'll see why!

I tied the spey fly using the flat tinsel, oval tinsel, body hackle sequence. Obviously it's the last sketch (F).

One slight drawback to the methods described above is that the hackle can obscure the tinsel slightly. This is because the hackle is being drawn over the tinsel from the right instead of away from the tinsel if tied in on the tinsel's left side.

F. The last sketch

Tie in the flat tinsel first. Then beside it tie in the oval tinsel followed by the hackle. After completing the seal body wind the flat tinsel up the body first. Next wind the oval tinsel tight up against the right side of the flat tinsel. Finally wind the body hackle tight against the right side of the oval tinsel.

After trying this Method, you probably would expect your fly to look noticeably better. The next word must be thought, screamed and read over and over again-----WRONG!

This method has a partner and he's called Mr. Hackle. If Mr. Hackle is of poor quality, Mr. Method alone won't really improve your fly "much".

How do you know if Mr. Hackle is of poor quality? Listen carefully - "heh, heh! ", that's him laughing at ya!

Oh, all right, if you still haven't gotten the hint - most tyers (I'd say all, but there is a tyer on the Isle of Quemoy who has decent Mr. Hackle) are using poor to horrible Hackle.

While tyers are scouring the world for exotic feathers, I'm quietly searching for decent body hackle. Now you're thinking and asking "what's decent hackle?" - Nice try, but that's why we have a Difficult Partnership!

THE FLIES OF TOLFREY

by Michael D. Radencich

In the last "Salmon Flyer" I described the methods and techniques I used to produce an authentic reproduction of Frederic Tolfrey's Jones's Guide to No. This time I thought I would pass along the recipes for the flies for use on Norwegian rivers that Tolfrey described in the book.

There were actually two distinct groups of flies that were set forth in this little guidebook; "General Flies" and "Select Flies", the latter set being the ones that were illustrated as hand-colored engraved plates.

Of the first set of flies Tolfrey said this: ""The following specimens are neither so large nor so bright in color as those in the illustrations which will be found towards the end of this volume. The eighteen here described are of a soberer hue, but will be found both captivating and killing, not only on the Drammen and Lougen, but on the Namsen, the Guul, the Nid, and every river in Norway and Sweden..."

Here are the patterns:

#1

Tail: Red Mohair.
Body: Red Pig's wool.
Ribs: Flat gold tinsel.
Hackle: Red.
Wings: Copper-colored Mallard (divided).

#2

Tail: Red Mohair.
Body: Orange Pig's wool.
Ribs: Gold oval tinsel.
Hackle: Red with black up the center.
Wings: Copper-colored Mallard.

#3

Tag: Gold tinsel and crimson Mohair.
Tail: A topping.
Body: Black Pig's wool.
Ribs: Flat silver tinsel.
Hackle: Black.
Wings: Copper-colored Mallard (divided).

#4

Tail: Crimson Mohair.
Body: One-half red Mohair and the other half black Pig's wool.
Ribs: Oval gold tinsel over red Mohair and flat silver tinsel over black.
Hackle: Black Heron.
Wings: Copper-colored Mallard (divided).

#5

Tail: Orange Mohair.
Body: One-half orange Pig's wool and the other half brown Pig's wool.
Ribs: Oval gold tinsel.
Hackle: Red.
Wings: Red-tailed Kite.

#6 (Also named "The Curate")

Tail: Red Mohair.
Body: Black Pig's wool.
Ribs: Broad, flat silver tinsel.
Hackle: Black.
Throat: Gallina.
Wings: Argus Pheasant tail.

#7

Tail: Scarlet Mohair.
Body: Orange Pig's wool.
Ribs: Oval gold tinsel.
Hackle: Black.
Wings: Two whole Grey Mallard feathers (reversed).

#8

Tail: Orange Mohair.
Body: Claret Pig's wool.
Ribs: Oval gold tinsel.
Hackle: Claret.
Wings: Two large copper-colored Mallard feathers (reversed).

#9

Tail: Orange Mohair.
Body: Claret Pig's wool.
Ribs: Broad, flat gold tinsel.
Hackle: Deep claret.
Throat: Mottled feather from the Capercailzie.
Wings: Bustard (divided).

#10

Tail: Orange Mohair.
Body: Black Pig's wool.
Ribs: Broad, flat silver tinsel.
Hackle: Black.
Wings: Peacock wing or light Argus Pheasant.

#11

Tag: Gold tinsel and yellow silk.
Tail: Scarlet Mohair.
Body: Black Pig's wool.
Ribs: Broad, flat silver tinsel.
Hackle: Black.
Throat: Orange Macaw feather.
Wings: White-tipped black Turkey or Snipe underwing feather.

#12

Tag: Gold tinsel.
Tail: A topping.
Body: Orange and black Mohair equally.
Ribs: Oval gold tinsel over orange and flat silver tinsel over black.
Hackle: Red and black.
Wings: Copper-colored Mallard and Bustard mixed.

#13

Tail: Scarlet Mohair.
Body: Black Mohair.
Ribs: Oval gold or silver tinsel.
Hackle: Scotch hackles. (?)
Wings: Light, mottled feather from the tame Drake's back.

#14

Tag: Gold tinsel.
Tail: Yellow Mohair.
Body: Orange Mohair, pale blue Mohair and claret Pig's wool equally.
Ribs: Oval silver tinsel.
Hackle: Black.
Wings: Mottled Turkey.

#15

Tag: Orange silk.
Tail: A topping.
Butt: Black Ostrich herl.
Body: Bright crimson silk.
Ribs: Flat silver tinsel.
Hackle: Blood-red.
Wings: A pair of Toucan feathers, a pair of feathers from the Black-headed pheasant and two toppings over.
Horns: Blue and gold Macaw.
Head: Black herl.

#16

Tag: Gold tinsel.
Tail: A topping.
Body: Yellow silk.
Ribs: Flat gold tinsel.
Hackle: Yellow.
Wings: Four toppings.
Head: Yellow.

#17

Tag: Gold tinsel and yellow silk.
Tail: A topping from the Indian Black-headed Pheasant.
Butt: Black herl.
Body: Two turns of orange silk, the rest black silk.
Ribs: Flat silver tinsel and oval gold tinsel.
Hackle: Black.
Throat: Green Parrot and Grouse.
Wings: Gold and silver Pheasant's tail, tippets, red Macaw, green Parrot, Teal, Gallina, Mallard and Peacock wing.
Cheeks: Kingfisher.

#18

Tag: Gold tinsel and light blue silk.
Tail: A topping.
Butt: Black herl.
Body: Two turns of puce silk, the rest orange silk.
Ribs: Broad flat gold tinsel.
Hackle: Gallina, half way.
Throat: Jay.
Wings: Gold and silver Pheasant's tail, tippets, red Macaw, Green Parrot, Teal, Gallina, Mallard and Peacock wing.
Cheeks: Kingfisher.

The next twenty patterns are of the "select" salmon flies that are illustrated as hand-colored engravings in the book. Of them Tolfrey said: "The twenty specimens here given have been carefully selected by some of the most accomplished Salmon fishers that ever threw a line". It is interesting to note that this was the first time the "Popham" shows up as an illustration in a fishing book.

#1- The Baronet

Tag: Gold tinsel.
Tail: A tuft of red Mohair.
Body: Claret Pig's wool.
Ribs: Oval gold tinsel.
Hackle: Black and yellow wound together.
Wings: Tippets dyed crimson tied back to back veiled with Mallard, Teal, Golden Pheasant tail and Argus tail.
Horns: Blue and gold Macaw.
Head: Black wool.

#2 - The Rainbow

Tag: Silver oval tinsel.
Tail: A topping.
Body: Blood-red, orange, yellow, green, blue and rich purple Pig's wool.
Ribs: Oval silver tinsel.
Hackle: Hackles over each body section of the same color.
Wings: Four toppings.
Head: Black wool.

#3 - The Stunner

Tag: Silver tinsel and crimson silk.
Tail: A topping.
Body: Pale blue, yellow, claret and dark blue Pig's wool.
Ribs: Flat gold tinsel and silver oval tinsel.
Hackle: Claret.
Throat: Gallina and blue.
Wings: Two tippets back to back, veiled with a little Bustard and two toppings over all.
Horns: Blue and gold Macaw.
Head: Yellow Mohair.

#4 - The Butcher

Tag: Gold tinsel and orange silk.
Tail: A topping or Gallina.
Body: Claret, pale blue, red and dark blue Pig's wool.
Ribs: Flat silver tinsel.
Hackle: Black.
Throat: Orange and Gallina.
Wings: Tippets, red Golden Pheasant rump feather, Mallard, Teal, Gallina and Golden Pheasant tail.
Horns: Blue and gold Macaw.
Head: Black wool.

#5 - The Jackass

Tag: Gold tinsel and orange silk.
Tail: A topping.
Body: Dun colored Donkey fur mixed with a little red Mohair.
Ribs: Flat gold tinsel.
Hackle: A grizzled dun hackle.
Throat: Jay.
Wings: Tippet in strands, Mallard, Teal, Gallina, Golden Pheasant tail, Bustard and Peacock wing.
Horns: Blue and gold Macaw.
Head: Black wool.

#6 - The Doctor

Tag: Gold tinsel and scarlet Mohair (as a butt).
Tail: A topping and Teal.

Body: Pale blue silk.
Ribs: Flat silver tinsel.
Hackle: Jay.
Wings: Tippet in strands, Mallard, Teal, Bustard, Gallina, Turkey, Green Parrot and blue and red Macaw with a topping over (optional).
Head: Red wool.

#7 - The Baker

Tag: Gold tinsel and blue silk.
Tail: A topping.
Butt: Black ostrich herl.
Body: Yellow silk followed by orange, blue and red Mohair.
Ribs: Flat gold tinsel.
Hackle: Claret or red.
Throat: Gallina.
Wings: Tippets, Mallard, Teal, Green Parrot, Bustard or Golden Pheasant tail.
Horns: Blue and gold Macaw.
Head: Wrap a blue hackle one or two turns like a

#8 - The Bonne Bouche

Tag: Gold tinsel.
Tail: A topping.
Butt: Scarlet Mohair.
Body: First half yellow and second half bright claret Pig's wool.
Ribs: Oval gold tinsel.
Hackle: Bright claret.
Throat: Gallina or Jay.
Wings: Mallard, Teal, Gallina, Bustard with a claret hackle in the center.
Horns: Blue and red Macaw.
Head: Black wool.

#9 - The Switcher

Tag: Gold tinsel and orange silk.
Tail: A topping.
Butt: Black Ostrich herl.
Body: Dark blue Pig's wool.
Ribs: Flat silver tinsel and oval gold tinsel.
Hackle: Dark blue (the pattern does not list a hackle but the colored engraving does show it).
Throat: Orange.
Wings: Mallard, Teal, Bustard, Golden Pheasant tail and Peacock (wing?) with a blue hackle wrapped around the head like a collar.
Horns: Blue and red Macaw.
Head: Black wool.

#10 - The Childers

Tag: Gold tinsel and yellow silk.
Tail: A topping and Teal.
Body: Yellow, orange and red Pig's wool.
Ribs: Flat gold tinsel.
Hackle: Black or red.
Throat: Jay.
Wings: Mallard, Teal, Gallina, Bustard, Green Parrot, Golden Pheasant tail, Peacock (wing?) and Black Cockatoo.
Horns: Blue and gold Macaw.
Head: Black wool.

#11- The Artful Dodger

Tag: Silver tinsel and orange silk.
Tail: A topping.
Butt: Black Ostrich herl.
Body: Green silk with green Pig's wool at the shoulder.
Ribs: Flat silver tinsel and gold oval tinsel.
Hackle: Black.
Throat: Blue.
Wings: Two tippets back to back veiled with Bustard and Golden Pheasant tail with two toppings over all.
Horns: Blue and gold Macaw.
Head: Black wool.

#12 - The Assassin

Tag: Gold tinsel followed by blue and scarlet silk.
Tail: A topping, Gallina and blue Macaw.
Butt: Black Ostrich herl.
Body: Dark blue and claret Pig's wool equally.
Ribs: Flat gold tinsel.
Throat: Jay.
Wings: Mallard, Teal, Bustard, Black Cockatoo, Gallina, tippet and a topping.
Horns: Blue and gold Macaw.
Head: Black wool.

#13 - The Cadogan

Tag: Silver tinsel.
Tail: A topping and Kingfisher.
Butt: Black herl.
Body: Crimson silk and crimson Pig's wool.
Ribs: Flat gold and silver tinsel.
Hackle: Claret.
Throat: Blue.
Wings: Tippets back to back veiled with Mallard, Teal, Bustard, Gallina, Argus and Golden Pheasant tail.
Horns: Blue and gold Macaw.
Head: Black wool.

#14 - The Tom Tickler

Tag: Silver tinsel and light blue silk.
Tail: A topping.
Butt: Black Ostrich herl.
Body: Yellow silk and red Pig's wool at the shoulder.
Ribs: Flat gold tinsel.
Hackle: Red.
Throat: Gallina.
Wings: Tippet in strands, Mallard, Teal, Gallina, Bustard, Green Parrot, Red Macaw and Golden Pheasant tail.
Cheeks: Kingfisher.
Horns: Blue and gold Macaw.
Head: Black Ostrich herl.

#15 - The Popham

Tag: Silver tinsel.
Tail: A topping and Indian Crow.
Butt: Black Ostrich herl.
Body: In three sections: #1 - Orange silk ribbed with oval gold tinsel, veiled above and below with Indian crow and butted with black herl; #2 - Yellow silk ribbed, veiled and butted as before; #3 - Blue silk ribbed

with oval silver tinsel and veiled as before.
Throat: Jay.
Wings: Tippet in strands, Mallard, Teal, Gallina, Bustard, Green Parrot, Red Macaw and Golden Pheasant tail and a topping over all.
Horns: Blue and gold Macaw.
Head: Black wool.

#16 - The Dandy

Tag: Silver tinsel.
Tail: A topping.
Body: In four sections: #1 - pale green silk ribbed with oval silver tinsel and a butt of black herl; #2 - dark blue Mohair with a butt of Jay; #3 - scarlet Mohair and oval silver tinsel with a butt of scarlet hackle; #4 - deep claret Pig's wool ribbed with oval silver tinsel
Throat: A black hackle dyed blue.
Wings: Peacock herl, Peacock wing, Golden Pheasant tail, light mottled Turkey and one blue feather from die right and left wing of the Jay.
Head: Brown Mohair.

#17 - The Fairy

Tag: Gold tinsel and yellow silk.
Tail: A topping.
Butt: Black Ostrich herl.
Body: Orange silk and bright orange Pig's wool equally.
Ribs: Oval silver tinsel and black silk strand.
Hackle: Light claret.
Throat: Jay.
Wings: Four toppings.
Head: Black herl.

#18 - The Flower of Kelso

Tag: Gold tinsel and yellow silk.
Tail: A topping.
Butt: Black Ostrich herl.
Body: Light blue silk.
Ribs: Flat gold tinsel and oval silver tinsel.
Hackle: Jay.
Wings: Four toppings.
Horns: Blue and gold Macaw.
Head: Black herl.

#19 - The Colonel

Tag: Gold tinsel and yellow silk.
Tail: A topping.
Body: Orange silk and orange Pig's wool equally.
Ribs: Flat silver tinsel, oval gold tinsel and black silk strand.
Hackle: Crimson.
Throat: Mottled Bustard.
Wings: Three toppings veiled with Bustard, Golden Pheasant tail and Argus.
Horns: Blue and gold Macaw.
Head: Black herl.

Note: The colored engraving shows a collar of blue hackle although the recipe didn't list it.

Tag: Silver tinsel and crimson silk.
Tail: A topping.
Body: Pale blue, orange, claret and dark blue.
Pig's wool.
Hackle: Claret.
Throat: Gallina and Bustard.
Wings: Two tippets back to back over which are claret hackles on each side, and a Snipe feather on each side, all of which is veiled with Bustard and Argus with two toppings over and a yellow hackle around the head like a collar.
Head: Black herl.

HAVE YOU TICKLED YOUR BUTCHER LATELY?

By Wayne Luallen

When tying a body that calls for seal or a seal substitute, my preference in most cases is to have a very loose, stringy appearance. To achieve this I have found that the combination of a tool called a "tickler" and some specific dubbing techniques achieve my desired result.

If loose dubbing is desirable, some teasing out of the fur will be required at some point after wrapping. You will find that over-wrapping seal over seal will reduce the desired shaggy appearance and possibly lead to broken thread due to over zealous teasing. One method I use is to dub seal loosely and fairly thickly and tapered on the thread. I hold the bottom-most portion of the seal as I wrap, not adding any additional twists other than what is inherent with the wrapping thread. Another method I like is to twist very tightly a tiny bit of dubbing out of a well blended batch of seal, make a wrap over the shank with it and hand wrap the remainder of the seal down the thread into the desired taper, pinch as before and wrap. Still another approach is to begin the seal as with the last approach and while the thread is wrapped forward allow the seal to be pulled out of a blended batch in your hand. The more pressure applied to the seal the less seal released resulting in a thinner body, and vice versa for a thicker body. The inherent twist created in the thread by wrapping around the hook will carry the seal with it. I would not recommend putting the seal in a dubbing loop. It will take more vigorous teasing to get the desired result and may lead to broken thread.

No matter what technique you use, be sure to taper the seal near the head to avoid a resulting bulk that would force the wing upward.

You can decide if you want to tease the seal prior to wrapping the rib and body hackle or after. My preference is to tease before and after. The advantage of teasing before is that it allows the rib and hackle to seat deeply enough so that it isn't loosened by teasing after the fact. The disadvantage is that it takes more care and effort to seat the rib and hackle while not trapping strands of stray seal. The advantage to teasing after wrapping the rib and hackle is that the strands pushed out of the way by the rib and hackle can now be realigned and blended with the hackle. The disadvantage is that care must be taken to avoid breaking the hackle rachis or rib.

I have tried a variety of tools to tease out seal: bodkin, velcro, trimmed tooth brush, .22 gauge gun brush, root canal burr (ouch! - ed.), etc. Finally I was introduced to Gordon Mankins' "tickler". It is basically a small handle with multiple wires sticking out about 1/4 inch from one end. As is, it is fine for most things. If a stiffer brush is required, simply wrap thread around the base of the wires as they leave the handle.

When I first received this tool, I must confess I was a bit skeptical since nothing had worked as well for me as the slow process of pinching out the seal with a bodkin. I promised Gordon that I would give it a try. It was a few weeks before I put it to the test. Now, a few years later, I'd hate to be without it. It is amazing what other uses I have found for it from using it on #22 midge pupae up to large fur leeches.

Footnote: Not all of us have real seal or choose to use a material no longer legal in some areas.

A product that is readily available is "African Goat", a Mohair byproduct. The very straightness of this material makes it a bit more difficult to dub and it lacks the crinkled appearance of real seal. A solution

to both problems is to simply wad up a clump in the palm of your hand and smash, crush and damage it to your heart's content. Then reblend it and dub using one of the above methods.

Another material that is quite new is Davy Wotton's Synthetic Living Fibre or SLF. This product is available through shops that sell Partridge products and comes in 48 different colors. I have only limited experience using it but my feeling is that it does not dub as well as natural fur as it lacks the scales on the fibers that help to interlock the fur blend. The colors, though, are lustrous and consistent. I understand that some colors are offered in hanks that may prove useful on "mane" flies such as the Beaconsfield.

A REBUTTAL

by Tom Juracek

Regarding "Some Thoughts on Salmon Fly Tying" (October 1992), I was not offended in the least by this letter. When I finished reading it I was in a wild-eyed raging fury! Hot under the collar! Ready to bust a few b~s! We're talking "someone is going to be toasted"!! Actually, I found the letter quite interesting. In fact, I could even have seen it addressed at myself in particular!

There are several salmon fly tiers who regularly ask me to critique their work. The purpose of these critiques is to help people become better tiers and to give them a different perspective on the rendition of the pattern that I am looking at. Someone overhearing one of these critiques could certainly misconstrue my intentions and purpose. Perhaps, for example, I find that the tinsel is not evenly spaced as it advances up the body. I would probably say "the tinsel is terrible". I am appalled by the lack of skill used in tying the tinsel onto the fly. The beginning is not clean, the wraps are not even and it does not finish beneath the hook. I can also see the start of the tinsel from the far side of the fly. Next time, get out the ruler and measure your spacing of the tinsel! Does my critique suggest that the tinsel has been tied incorrectly? Do I disagree with the methods employed (actually, the results obtained) by the tier? Because my tinsel has been measured and is accurately spaced, are my flies better that the other tier's?

Most any artist (and that is basically what salmon fly tiers are) looks for criticism of their work. Without any disagreement regarding the finished concept, there is no room to grow and learn. Without someone to guide a tier to the next level of expertise, even if it is through criticism and encouragement, how can they expect to advance? I readily admit to criticizing other people's work. (He admits it! What a snob! Hang 'im high, that's what I say!!) On the other hand, if I like it I say so as well.

It is certainly possible for someone listening to my critiques to come to the conclusion that what I would have done is the only right and proper way. But that's not the point. The point is that an exchange of ideas has taken place. If the tier agrees with me, then perhaps they will learn something. If they disagree with me, so be it. They like what they have done, I do not, time goes on. (He thinks he's high and mighty doesn't he?)

The author of the letter continues on to suggest that there is no "right or wrong" way to tie a salmon fly. I disagree. If I decide to attach my tail to the point of the hook and leave bare thread advancing around to the head, have I tied a salmon fly correctly'? Of course not. There is a framework within which all salmon fly tiers work. While this framework is undefined (and these days it is constantly being stretched) it can be defined rather simply. If you look at a fly and your brain says "that’s a salmon fly" then you have worked within the boundaries of what is acceptable as a salmon fly. To use an analogy, let's take a house. Is there one correct way to build a house? Of course not. On the other hand, one would not consider a skyscraper a house although it is a building. But there are certainly conventions used in house building.

Particular architects have a style of house design that is noticeable. This does not necessarily make one architect's house design better than another's, unless the second architect is attempting to design in the style of the first. Enough about real estate. (About time too! I thought this was about fly tying!)

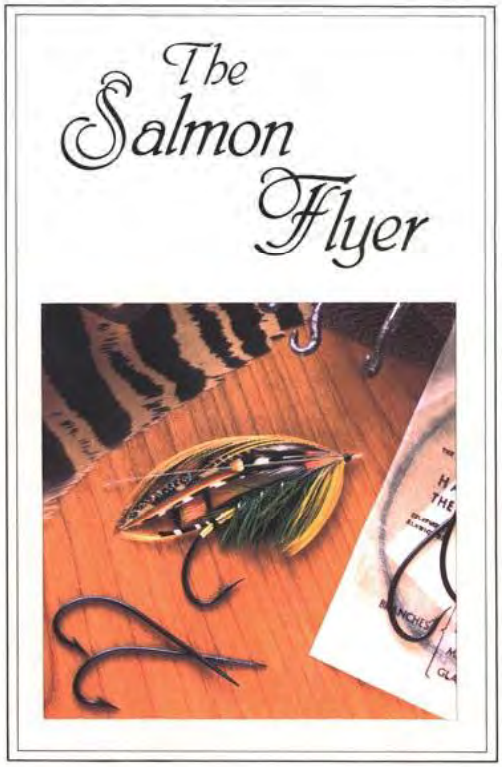
There is a further distinction between "right and wrong" in tying flies. This is the question of "presentation flies". Any fly tied as a presentation fly should basically be flawless in execution. One of the things I find most enjoyable about tying salmon flies is the difficulty in executing numerous steps while attempting to make each one perfect. (I've seen it before - masochistic tendencies!) I have never done it. If you carefully look through your fly box for an Elk Hair Caddis, how many would you consider

suitable for framing? Every one? If not, why not? Your answer to that question will tell you whether there is a right or wrong way to tie a fly. (In reality what it will tell you is what you like and dislike. Only too often has this been equated with right and wrong.) In salmon flies, the question of right or wrong may not be tapered or untapered bodies, but having made the selection how well has it been executed? (HEAR! HEAR! - Ed.)

As to the question of authentic versus substitute materials, I concur with the author's sentiments. Birds raised in a captive environment by breeders should be a viable source for the rarer feathers. Otherwise, substitutes should be the rule. (What a heretic! Burn him at the stake!!) My way of thinking suggests that substitute materials are more than adequate, provided that the substitutes compliment the fly in the same manner that the original materials do. A substitute that does not do justice to the material it is replacing is not a substitute.

As I once heard someone say: "The only real Jock Scott that was ever tied was the first one. After that they have all been replicas." To insist that one is tying an authentic fly simply because rare materials have been used is in my estimation a grave oversight. What is a real Jock Scott? If the numerous authors of salmon fly books cannot agree on the same dressing for this fly, how can one insist that one has tied an authentic fly, or even a better fly for that matter, simply because Chatterer has been used for the cheeks? Does the fact that a rare feather has been incorporated into the dressing somehow make this fly right?

I've put my two cents worth into this discussion. It is time to hear from other tiers. I will make no apologies for ruffling a few hackles. If you disagree with the opinions set forth in this essay, then write back with a response that says I've sniffed too much head cement!



GREEN HIGHLANDER
Dressed by Mike McCoy

TO WHAT LENGTHS

BY Michael McCoy

Several years ago I had the pleasure to finally meet in person Bob Veverka and to participate in one of his classes. Bob dazzled a number of us from Oregon and Washington with his talent and skill. Never have I seen full dressed salmon flies tied with such speed and deftness of hand and still see Bob carry on four conversations at the same time while never missing a wrap of thread.

Some months later I found myself seated at Bob's tying desk learning the nuances of tying everything from Speys to streamers to Atlantic salmon hair wings. One item I had yet to experiment with was silkworm gut. Bob kindly spent time showing me how to work this aged material. To my surprise a tiny brown speck would often erupt into a broken or frayed fiber just when it looked as if satisfactory results were just moments away.

Curiosity and desire for improvement lead me to Kelson's book wherein I searched for answers which might help me overcome the problems I had already experienced with silkworm gut. Sure enough on page 443 1 discovered the solution to all my previous problems - an antique gut twister. I decided to try to replicate this tool once used by the masters. After all, it didn't look complicated!

I picked up a catalogue containing components for making unusual devices and determined that I would need nylon gears, a drive chain, shaft, handle and aluminum stock. The assembly progressed better than I had expected and I was ready to put it to the test. I rotated the handle a few turns to see if all three gears were rotating simultaneously to ensure an even and tight twist. Three more turns and the nylon chain broke and had to be repaired, after which I then determined that I needed to have loops of wire extending from the shafts so as not to twist the gut at an extreme angle.

All in all, after some fine tuning, the creation proved functional and who could argue with the results after I had only spent a few pennies less than $100.00?

The bottom line is, if you wish to avoid a knot in your own gut (intestine), use hemostats and a shepherd's hook for twisting. The cost of two cheap hemostats and a hook is less than $15.00. The other $85.00 could buy you some great materials (Ed. note: such as silks - hint, hint!).

Instructions for twisting silkworm gut.

1. Soak gut overnight in cool water.
2. Secure three equal lengths of gut of equal diameter together with a hemostat at one end.
3. Make sure all pieces are parallel and hemostat the other ends. Try to avoid any crossing or overlapping prior to twisting.
4. Secure the far end hemostat to a solid object.
5. Place the shepherd's hook into the near end hemostat and begin to twist.
6. While twisting stroke gut with cool water using your thumb and inside finger to advance twists toward your distant hemostat. The water is important as it eliminates friction while twisting.
7. When the desired results have been obtained, keep tension between the hemostats and tack them down to a board, slightly stretching the twisted gut at the same time. Let the gut dry overnight and enjoy results the next morning

THE WING

by Tom Juracek

This article was written as the result of a telephone call I had several nights ago from a fellow reader of this publication. To all the readers who may have discarded materials as being worthless, my apologies for being delinquent in writing the following. To those readers for whom I am about to turn worthless or unusable materials into good materials, you owe me a debt of gratitude that I intend to collect!!

On a more serious note, swan feathers, while called for in tying almost all wings on salmon flies do not necessarily lend themselves to being the most workable material. The tyer commonly uses the secondary wing quills ("secondary remiges" for you technical types). Occasionally one finds also the feathers that fit between the wing and the body. Sorry Wayne, didn't know the technical terms although perhaps they are the upper major secondary coverts (UMSC)?! At any rate, the UMSC tend to resemble what are commonly referred to as center feathers. These feathers generally display a good curvature and contain more than adequate barb length for winging salmon flies. What I dislike about them is that they tend to be "thin" in the barb diamter. They are rather translucent with a lot of barbules but not much substance. They also tend to taper to a very fine tip for about the last quarter to half inch. When tied on as a wing, they tend to make the fly look weak and underwinged.

The secondary feathers are the ones I prefer to work with. There is a little more substance to the barb, but a dramatic taper still exists in the last quarter inch. A major problem can arise from these feathers, i.e. recurve. This is where a feather starts to curve back towards its center and then near their tips the barbs curve back out and away from the quill.

How to fix the recurve? This is my currently approved method. I have a steam iron that contains six settings. I select setting number two, which does not produce steam. Holding the feather up above a smooth surface, I proceed to form the desired curvature (actually much more than intended in the final product) by lowering and sliding the feather along the surface. I then iron the feather. The iron touches only the barbs and goes no more than halfway up the barbs to the rachis. DO NOT apply too much pressure. The heat will do the work. When done properly this will produce a dramatic curve in the feather in the proper direction.

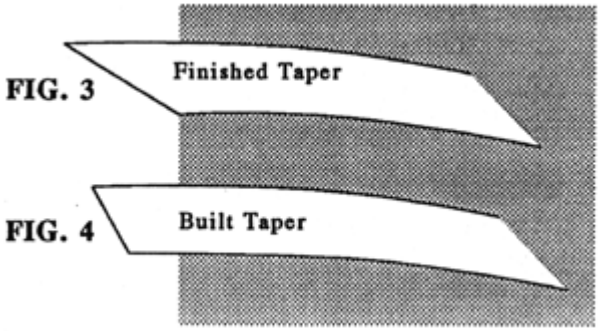
This may or may not be a permanent fix. Some feathers will respond to this treatment and hold their shape. Others will, after several hours of sitting or upon handling, return to their original shape. For these feathers a second step is employed. Take a piece of cardboard of the type commonly used for making boxes. Carefully slice in one side a small trough that is roughly the size and length of the rachis of the swan feather. Don't forget the curve. Make enough slices so that you can fill the piece of cardboard with feathers, but do not allow any two to overlap. You will now need a matching piece of cardboard without slices. Iron the feathers as described above and lay them into a slice, good side up. After filling up the piece of cardboard, cover with the unsliced cardboard and place a heavy object on top of this sandwich. I use the speakers of a stereo system. Allow a month to pass before expecting to use these feathers. I would recommend at least 8 weeks. Remember that the feathers are not any good now so no sense in hurrying the reclamation project.

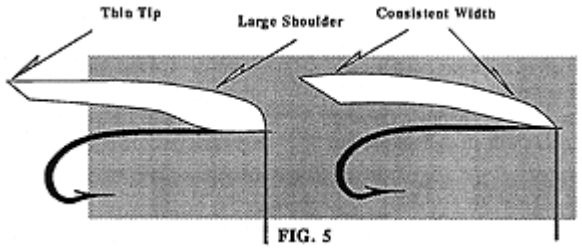
Now for the do's and don'ts of the above method. Do NOT attempt this method with any feather from a land-based bird. ONLY attempt it on waterfowl. Why? Due to the structure of waterfowl feathers, the barbs do not have a tendency to turn under the ironing process. Iron a Golden Pheasant tail and the barbs will turn 90 degrees on you. The quantity and meshing of the barbs in waterfowl feathers tends to inhibit this problem.

A tip for dyeing swan. Never attempt to dye a swan feather that has not been immersed in water for at least one and a half hours. Make sure you have thoroughly washed the feather, probably twice, before dyeing. If the feather is very wet and "full" of water it will absorb the dye much easier. Just as the feather naturally repels water, so it will repel dye unless properly soaked.

Usage of Swan. Remember back at the beginning of this discussion I addressed the taper at the tip of each barb? This taper will cause your wing to assume a rather distinctive shape when applied to the hook (Fig. 3). I take into account two items when building a wing. First, I build the wing with some but not total disregard to the height near the shoulder of the fly. I concentrate on making the wing big towards the rear as this is where it will show the most on the finished fly and where the inadequate amount of material will be most apparent. Second, when building the wing I make the taper steeper than what one might expect to find on the finished fly (Fig. 4).

After lashing the wing to the hook, I gently stroke the upper fibers towards the rear of the hook. Also, I pull the lower fibers up onto the top of the hook. Proper stroking will narrow the shoulder section of the wing, place a more gradual taper into the end of the wing and allow the it to assume the desired shape (Fig. 5). I am literally remarrying the wing after it is applied to the hook. If you wish to see an example of what happens to the wing when it is tied down, take a section of swan 5 strands broad. You will be able to see the difference in the width of the strands at the base and at the tips as you hold it. If you stroke the wing in a manner to elongate the taper at the tip, you will find that the overall width of the section becomes much more consistent. If you attempt to shorten the taper, the difference in width becomes larger (Fig. 5). Further, you will notice that the fibers do not tend to remarry when shortening the taper. Rather, the tips remarry and towards the butts the barbs separate from one another while remaining married in their original positions. The barbules refuse to release and remarry and as a result the tension is relieved by separating from one another while remaining married.





Here is another method for dealing with fibers with recurve. Certain feathers generally have dramatic curves - sometimes Bustard, usually Peacock, to a certain extent Golden Pheasant. Alternate strands or sections from these feathers in between sections that have recurves. The curves and recurves will offset each other and you will basically have a flat wing that will apply properly to the hook. Several words of warning. Do not generally attempt to place a recurve section as the lowest fibers in the wing. It usually does not sit well on the hook. Do not place three recurve sections together and expect a curved section at the top and bottom to straighten it out. This may look okay when lying on the bench but under pressure it will warp. Try to keep a properly curved section at the top of the wing. By utilizing curved sections at the top and bottom you will be able to obtain the desired "cupping" action to the wing.

Sort your feathers. If you have swan sections that do not have recurve, use these on flies that require swan sections and not much else. Use the recurve feathers in flies that have numerous and differing wing materials. Don't be afraid to use dyed turkey as one of the wing sections and make the remainder out of swan in order to help alleviate the recurve. Turkey is a tough, durable, thick-barbed feather that will straighten out just about any excessive curve or recurve.

Golden Pheasant feathers sometimes have incorrect curves. My experience in this area says that the feathers tend to "cup" to an excessive degree. As the barb leaves the rachis it is at a 90 degree angle to the rachis. As you follow individual barbs out towards their tips, the barbs curve back towards the rachis on the inside (good) but also can tend to turn with the inside (bad) side of the barb facing the tip of the feather. This twisting action can make the Golden Pheasant hard to marry to other feathers, hard to marry to itself and difficult to maintain proper shape when pressure is brought to bear while lashing the wing to the body.

My solution to this is as follows: Remove from the tail the fibers from the side you do not intend to use. Place two pieces of cardboard together. Gently place the pheasant tail barbs between the two pieces of cardboard but leave the quill outside along the edge. Grab hold of the pheasant tail rachis near the butt of the section and gently push towards the tip of the tail. This should cause the barbs that are between the two cardboard sections to roll towards the butt of the feather. Tape the two sections together, allowing the tape to hold the rachis of the tail against the edge of the cardboard. Again, place under a weight. The feathers should have assumed a workable shape in only 2 to 3 days. This fix should be permanent.

A lot of other tyers have contributed to what has been written here, sometimes through direct ideas, sometimes through thought provoking suggestions. I would like to take this opportunity to thank all who have contributed, knowingly and unknowingly to this article.

THE FLIES OF HEWITT WHEATLY

by Mike Radencich

I guess you could call this article another in a series of "Flies from the Past". My goal is to pass along salmon fly patterns from antiquarian books that are no longer particularly easy to obtain, especially those that contain hand-colored plates of flies such as this one.

Hewitt Wheatley's little book titled The Rod and Line &c. was first published in 1849, just one year after Tolfrey's Pivotal Jones's Guide to Norway and was produced by the same printer (which also, by the way, published Ephemera's book The Book of the Salmon in 1850), i.e., Longman, Brown, Green and Longman of Paternoster Row, London.

This book contains nine exquisitely hand-colored plates, three of which depict a total of eight salmon flies (the rest of the plates depict trout flies, minnow lures, etc.). I feel that these salmon fly paintings rival in quality and color those found in Jones's Guide and, in fact, depict a number of rather interesting patterns which use some quite unusual materials that I, personally, have never seen listed elsewhere. These include feathers from the King Bird of Paradise and the Trogon, neither of which can be obtained today (at least not legally!).

Here are the patterns: (Note: these patterns are paraphrased and clarified from the originals.)

#1

Tag: Gold tinsel.
Tail: Two toppings.
Body: Equal portions of red, green and orange silk.
Ribs: Narrow flat gold tinsel.
Hackle: Black.
Throat: Grouse under the wing and Jay around the wing like a collar.
Wings: Argus tail, Bittern, Scarlet Macaw, Tippet and Summer duck.
Horns: Blue and gold or blue and red Macaw.
Head: Peacock herl.

#2

Tag: Gold tinsel.
Tail: A pair of Indian Crow back to back with Toucan on either side of these.
Body: Equal portions of green and yellow Pig's wool.
Hackle: Red.
Throat: Argus Pheasant hackle.
Wings: Bronze mallard with two toppings over.
Head: Peacock herl.

#3

Tag: Silver tinsel.
Body: Dark purple (material type not specified).
Hackle: Black.
Throat: Grouse.
Wings: Dark mottled Turkey or Bronze Mallard.
Head: Black Ostrich herl.

#4

Tag: Gold tinsel.
Tail: Short, of one red and one yellow feather side by side or a single Parrot feather of the same colors.
Body: Yellow silk.
Hackle: Bittern.
Wings: Bittern wing.

#5

Tail: Short, of one red and one yellow feather side by side or a single Parrot feather of the same colors.
Body: Bright red worsted.
Ribs: Black Ostrich and fine oval gold tinsel together.
Hackle: Golden Pheasant tippet.
Wings: 12 to 20 Peacock herl strands with a few Peacock sword strands over these.

#6

Body: White or grey worsted chenille.
Hackle: Yellowish white.
Wings: Two sets: the main wing is of the tips of two white feathers set to stand almost upright with the outer set as finer and smaller tips of two white feathers lying somewhat flatter to show under the first set (see accompanying plate).

#7

Tail: the point of a small Heron feather, to hang downward.
Body: The blue roots of Rabbit fur.
Hackle: Blue dun.
Throat: Blue feather from the Heron.
Horns: Two hackles with the fibers of each cut off close to the shafts and projecting straight out from the head to be about the same length as the body (see plate).

#8

Body: Green silk.
Ribs: Fine flat gold tinsel.
Hackle: Green cock Trogon feather or a black-red feather.
Wings: Two King Bird of Paradise ruff feathers set upright.
Head: Black Ostrich herl.

SHRUNKEN HEADS

Two different perspectives on how to get those teeny heads we all like.

A Technique for Making Smaller Heads on Salmon Flies -- and an Ethical Discussion About Using It.

by Tom Broderidge

I must have read those lines in Pryce-Tannatt a dozen times, but for some reason this time I really read them:

"Usually a pattern with wings put on in this manner possesses a head very much smaller than it would be possible to produce in the ordinary way." (!!!!)

The words are on page 198 of my 1977 edition at the end of a section called Transferring Wings that describes a process for removing (in one piece) undamaged wings from a damaged fly and refitting them onto a new body.

The process is to slit the underside of the varnished head right down to the gut loop, remove the head and wings together, and then transfer them to a new body, setting them in place, "...in much the same way as a saddle is placed on a horse's back." The wings are then secured with a few turns just back of the old head and then the old head is carefully removed.

Pryce-Tannatt notes the resultant smaller head without much interest, as if it were simply a not unpleasant by-product of having a newly repaired fly. But every tyer wants flies with neat, small heads. If this shrunken head technique works for fly repair, why not use the same technique during initial fly construction?

Common nails in sizes 8p through 16p should be about the same diameter as most salmon fly bodies. Bang the proper nail into a vertical surface, tie on a complete set of wings, finish the head and put the assembly aside so the head can dry and shrink.

The rate of compression of feather material bound down under head thread would seem to be a function of 1) the pressure from the thread, 2) the effect that some lacquers have on organic materials (perhaps similar to the way a magic marker can shrivel a feather) and 3) the amount of time that the original head is in place. The longer the head has been bound, the more it has probably shrunk.

So to tie the small-head fly, construct a body on a hook in the normal way. When it's time for the wings, cut them off the nail and "saddle" them onto the body. If the head on the Canary on Pryce-Tannatt's Plate V is any indication, the shrunken head technique does indeed make very neat, small heads.

So why doesn't this potentially effective technique excite me? Why do I feel like it's somehow "cheating"?

My introspective argument usually goes something like this:

> PRO: The technique must be okay because, after all, Pryce-Tannatt himself included it in what has become one of the major books on salmon fly tying instruction.
>
> CON: I don't care who wrote about it, it sounds commercial, like something a production fly tyer would come up with.
>
> PRO: What's wrong with production fly tyers?
>
> CON: Nothing. But full-dress salmon fly tyers aren't manufacturers. They are craftsmen and artists.

PRO: But in art doesn't the end justify the means? This technique allows you to make a better fly, and no one will have to know how you did it.

CON: Then why not forget all the old tying techniques and use super glue to make flies really neat and small?

PRO: Because that's not traditional. If nineteenth century tyers had used super glue, then maybe it would be alright today too.

CON: Your post-industrial revolution attitude cheapens the whole fly tying process. It sacrifices creativity for assembly line predictability.

PRO: You can still be creative - you're just building the wings on a nail instead of directly on the body.

CON: And then assembling the fly with all the artistry of a prefab kit. Do you have Tab A and Slot B too?

And so it goes. The result is always the same. "CON" narrowly wins out for reasons I can't quite put my finger on. But this technique offers some interesting possibilities, and it's there for anyone who wants to use it.

HEAD REDUCTION

By Glenn Peckel

Most practitioners of the art of salmon fly tying would agree that one universal goal we strive for is to tie flies with tiny heads.

Recently I had the opportunity to view a videotape made by a noted salmon fly tyer. The techniques employed allow for a fly with a reduced head.

The fly was tied in a standard fashion - the tag, tail, ostrich herl butt, body and ribbing all preceded the body hackle. Then, instead of tying the throat hackle next, an underwing of tippet feathers set back to back was tied in. But first each tippet feather had its stem cut lengthwise in half to the tie-in point. This simple step allowed for a reduction in bulk from two to one. By removing the inside portion of each underwing feather, a tighter pairing of tippets is also achieved as a consequence. A folded throat hackle is tied in, followed by the main wings, sides and cheeks - each step progressing forward while veiling each previous maneuver. A minimum number of thread wraps were employed to set the topping and horns allowing for the tiny head.

In my readings I discovered that a similar technique was employed by Ernest Crosfield. Not much is known of Crosfield's tying techniques but Eric Taverner in Fly Tying for Salmon notes that Crosfield tied his throat hackles (two or three turns) in the middle of his wings. His wings were built in sections separated by one or two turns of thread. This can only mean that he constantly worked on the bare steel of the hook shank. With his tying steps completed he needed only to make a few turns of thread to create a tiny head. Another Crosfield technique was the use of the silk body floss as the actual tying thread up to tying in the throat.

These two masters each realized that head reduction starts as material reduction. It is the economy of materials combined with the spaced progression of thread that obtains those nice tiny heads we all desire.

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A LINE IS DRAWN

William Chinn, Jr.

For some, it is difficult to get the right look for their salmon flies. The accompanying diagrams may help in improving the look of one's flies.

In Figure 1. a hook was xeroxed and enlarged. Then a line (A) was drawn from the end of the hook to its barbed point. Now duplicate this line above the shank of the hook (B) using the same angle and length as the lower line (A). These are the two most important real or imaginary lines you'll ever be associated with as a tyer (may as well be bold in that statement).

The bottom line (A) gives you a reference point for the line or angle of any body and throat hackle for the fly. The closer the hackle parallels this line the sleeker the look of the fly.

The angle of the hackle shown in the sketch (Fig. 1) is about right for this fly's profile. The heavy black line at the throat is shown to illustrate that if the throat hackle were to enter this area the hackle angle becomes too steep and hurts the fly's profile.

The top line (B) in Fig. 1 where it ends (approx. above the hook point) is a good reference point to visualize the maximum height of the fly's wing. If the wing's height exceeds this reference point too much, the look of the fly will start to be top heavy.

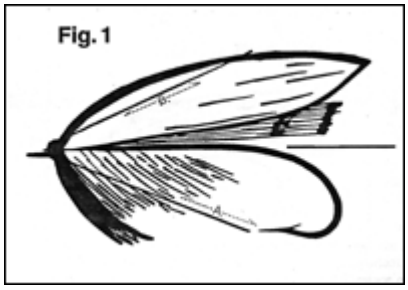


Fig. 2, Drawing A, shows an up-eyed modern steelhead hook. The wing is at its maximum height using line B as a reference point. If the wing is at its maximum height it is important to have the crest (if there is one) fairly tight against the top of the wing. If the crest is too far off of the wing, then it will create that top-heavy look you are trying to avoid (you are, aren't you?).

The hackle is slightly long but you can get away with it because it nicely follows line A.

Drawing B is of a long shank blind-eye hook. The wing's height is below the maximum height allowed by line B. This lower profile creates a sleeker (graceful) look and also allows more leeway in the placement of the crest as a topping.

The hackle is drawn in a little short but again it isn't a distraction as it correctly follows line A.

Drawing C is a regular shank blind-eye hook. The hackle seems to have the right angle and length. Wing height is also about right. This drawing differs from the others because of the wing – it angles upward. This style in which the wing angles up bears more attention and could prove to be a beautiful exception to what is discussed here.

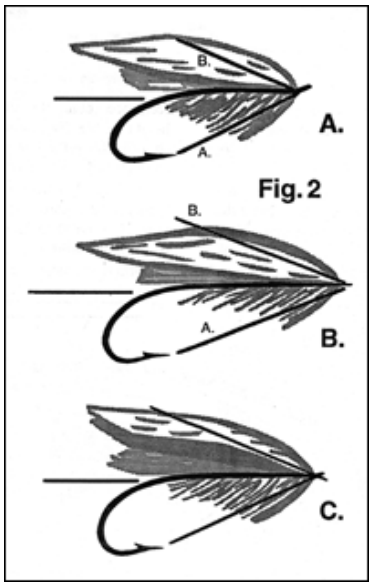
The question of wing length is not discussed here; however, it is sufficient to say that the wing can be as long as you want, all things being equal.

Hope this helps in creating a nicer looking fly. A fly's profile and style are too often overlooked. Emphasis on technique is fine to begin with but what good is a smooth floss body when the fly is still ugly as Sin?!

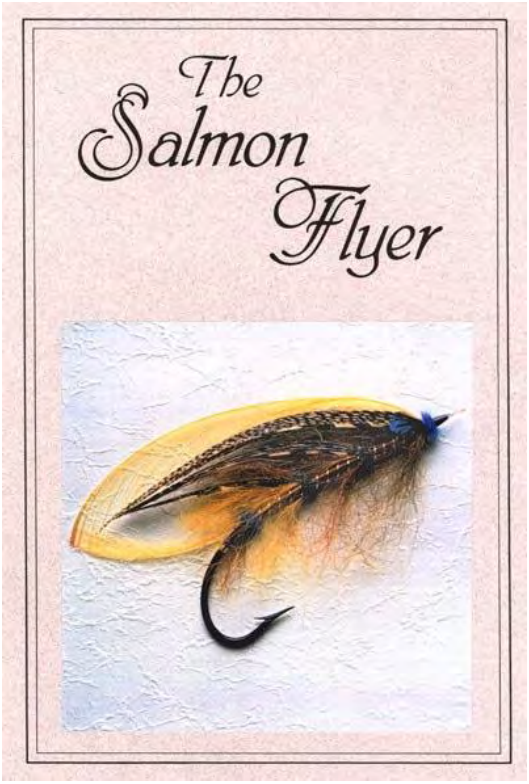
People can teach technique – can I say the same for style? Whatever the answer, a fly's style or profile comes down to the individual tyer and his or her individual tastes.

Next time, while tying a salmon fly, concentrate on its profile and style and forget about the uneven ribs or lump in the floss. You may find your flies dramatically improving in beauty.

Just a wild thought – salmon fly tying really isn't much harder than any other type of fly tying. It only seems to be difficult because everybody's telling you so. Why? Self-aggrandizement perhaps - Naaah! But, Pssst! Hey! The secret's out - it Ain't!



The Salmon Flyer
Vol. 5 - No. 3, Summer, 1993



THE WILD BOAR
Dressed by Mike Radencich

A BETTER INDIAN CROW SUB

Ted Roubal

On page 3 of Judith Dunham's book "The Atlantic Salmon Fly" two authentic Indian Crow feathers are shown as well as a Crow substitute feather which is depicted on the previous page. This sub is nothing

more than a white neck feather from the ring-necked pheasant dyed yellow and then dip-dyed orange and then red.

Staying with ring-necked feathers it may not be possible to improve much on feather shape (compare the oblong shape of the ring-necked feather with the fan shape of the real thing). However if the colors shown are true colors, it is seen that the substitute can stand improvements with regard to color, for it is too bright in yellow and orange. Much of the feather in real Indian Crow is tannish-brown with a hint of orange terminating with orange red at the tip. Surely, I thought, someone has already rendered the white feathers in such colors. But because I wasn't aware of how it may have been accomplished, I set out to reinvent the wheel, so to speak.

The color of the real Indian Crow brought to mind the likelihood that a natural product colorant would be a good starting point; subdued tans and browns are typical of several natural colorants (usually referred to, though incorrectly, as natural dyes), and they are noted for their excellent wash fastness (won't wash out in hot water). I needed fastness because I planned on using dip dyeing from a hot dyebath as the final stage in my quest and I didn't want the base color to be lost in the process.

I started with cutch, a natural product that contains catechin, a flavone-like substance that gives pleasing tans to light brown on copper mordanted fibers. Furthermore, compared to synthetic brown dyes (which, by the way, are difficult to find in the desired color), cutch is dirt cheap, nontoxic and noted for its excellent resistance to fading from light and water. Using such an approach I got close to the background color I was shooting for, but I felt I should do better. Then it occurred to me that highly insoluble rust-colored japonic acid, the oxidation product of catechin, might bring me closer to my goal. So I treated the cutch dyed feathers with a very dilute solution of the oxidant, potassium dichromate. This time around, I got what I was looking for. Now all I had to do was dip dye the tips red.

Because I wanted to be able to obtain red tips quickly and not have to hold them for a long time over a steaming dyepot, I reasoned that a low molecular weight acid dye of the proper color would probably do the trick. Thus I used the red dye Amido Naphthol Red G (Acid Red 1; Kiton Red) because it would quickly penetrate the pores of the fibers; in fact a single 10 second dip from a simmering hot 0.01% dyebath made acidic with hydrochloric acid was all I needed. In this regard, Veniard's crimson or Herter's crimson will also work; however, a longer dip time will be required.

Although natural dyes are a bit more complicated to apply than conventional synthetic acid dyes, the first step in the process, mordanting, is easily accomplished. And although it is also true that certain colors are harder to duplicate than others, the course I chose had no real serious stumbling blocks in it to reproducability of results.

The procedures I used are as follows:

Cutch (Catechin) On Copper-Mordanted Feathers

Place 300 ml (10 oz) of water in the dyepot and add 1/8 tsp of copper sulfate and 1/4 tsp of cream of tartar plus a few drops of Synthrapol. Add feathers and bring the liquid to a simmer for 15 minutes. Then add 1/4 tsp cutch crystals and continue the heating. The solution will turn a muddy green color, then brown. Heat for 3-5 minutes or until the feathers take on a nice light tan color (keep in mind that wet feathers will appear darker than when dry). Cool and rinse the feathers twice in fresh water.

Oxidation of Cutch-Dyed Feathers with Potassium Dichromate

Place the wet feathers in 5 oz of water and then add 3 tsp of a solution made by dissolving 1/8 tsp of potassium dichromate in a cup of water. Now bring up the heat slowly, heating just until the feathers take on a decidedly darker color. Look for a tan color with an overtone of rust. This should take 1-2 minutes of heating but not much more. Now add a large volume of warm water to prevent over-oxidation. Cool and rinse the feathers several times in fresh water containing a few drops of Synthrapol and then dry them (or leave them in the rinse water if you intend to dip dye them right away).

Dip Dyeing with a Leveling Acid Dye

Make a 0.01% solution (1/4 tsp of dye in

10 oz of dyebath) of a leveling acid dye (Acid Red 1 or Veniard's or Herter's crimson) in water, add a few drops of Synthrapol and 1/4 tsp of hydrochloric acid (1 tsp of glacial acetic acid may be substituted;

however, vinegar is inappropriate for rapid dyeing with leveling acid dyes). Bring the bath to a simmer and then dip just the very tips in the bath for about 10 seconds that is usually long enough when using Acid Red 1. If you use one of the other dyes you may want to use multiple dips because it gets uncomfortable holding feathers over a hot dyepot for the longer times needed. If you do this be sure to submerge the entire feather in clean water between dips. This will prevent the dye from creeping further up the feather with each dipping. Rinse each feather as it comes from the dipping bath and place it on paper toweling to dry. Voila! Now you have Indian Crow substitutes with good coloration.

The Beauly Snow Fly pictured here, dressed by Megan Boyd and given to Joseph Bates on his visit to her in 1973, is a preview of the new and expanded color plates from the revision of Atlantic Salmon Flies and Fishing. Written by Bates in the 1980's and currently in production, this completely new edition of the 1970 classic will feature the artwork of John Swan and the photography of Michael D. Radencich

MOUNTING FLIES

Mark Roth

Flies can be mounted in a number of different ways, but since some tyers don't want glue applied to the backs of their flies, I wanted to find a solution to this problem. Although plastic-post mounted flies are more attractive from a presentation standpoint, glue applied to a fly, particularly one with a floss body, can damage its over-all integrity. Sewing the fly to the mounting board is a good idea but a pain in the neck to achieve. An easier method that also allows for a dimensional "floating" effect to the fly is to use wire - about 30-gauge or so. I've been using the following method to mount customer's flies for about a year now, and have had nothing but positive results and comments.

This idea came to me after examining the color plates in Pryce-Tannatt's book How to Dress Salmon Flies. The flies depicted were mounted with either wire or thread, it's hard to tell which, but the idea of using wire was definitely the solution I had long been seeking.

To begin with, lay the fly down on the mounting board in the desired mounting position. Using a pencil, make two small marks; one under the eye and the other under the hook bend. (See the Helmsdale Doctor, plate IV in Pryce-Tannatt for ideal wire positioning.) Now poke a needle through each mark and erase any residual pencil marks. Remove the fly and take a 3" length of wire, wrapping it completely around the hook bend at the mounting point. Then pinch the wire together in a tight loop around the hook shank with fingernails or needle-nose pliers. Take another wire section, fold in half and put through the eye. Note in Pryce-Tannatt the wire is wrapped around the outside of the gut loop. By placing the wire inside the gut loop, the amount of wire showing is reduced.

Now insert the wire-ends hanging from the hook through each hole in the mounting board. When you get the wire-ends pushed through each hole, adjust the desired distance between the fly and the mount board to give the desired floating effect, then bend the wires flat on the back side of the board and tape them down. If the fly pivots once mounted, use needle-nose pliers to pinch the wire even tighter where it wraps around the hook wire. If that still doesn't hold, take a tiny dab of Krazy glue gel and apply it behind where the wire wraps around the hook. For a better cosmetic appearance, touch up the wire-wrap with a black felt-tip or Pantone pen (what about doing this before wrapping the wire around the hook? - ed.).

Another method I have found that works well is to use a single wire loop and wrapping it completely around the middle of the fly body and poking it through a single hole in the mount board, directly behind the fly. This will achieve the benefits of a post-mount while eliminating the two mounting holes at the hook bend and the eye. An obvious drawback, though, is having a vertical wire at the mid-way point of your fly body. But when a viewer stands back away from the display, it appears to be aesthetically insignificant. And if anyone can't figure out what the wire is doing, they are probably not going to notice it in the first place. You can even take a Pantone pen and appropriately color the wire to match body color before mounting. For this method, a bit heavier gauge wire is required and must be wrapped as tightly as possible around the body to avoid pivoting of the fly.

(Editor's note - It occurred to me that coloring the vertical part of the wire "post" the color of the mount board might even make the wire less visible. You would have to use some kind of opaque paint to mask the color of the wire and match your board color. Another thought would be to cut a short length of very fine aluminum tubing (obtainable at hobby stores), color it to match your mount board and use as a post through which you can push your wire - this might work quite well for the mid-body single wire).

TWO TRULY TUBULAR TWEEZER TOOLS

Marvin Nolte

Sorry, alliteration at any avenue is an abomination. Both of these implements were designed by John Betts and were originally used to crimp synthetic fibers on trout flies. I use mine in a similar fashion, but to reshape feathers by crimping their rachides instead. The following procedure for making this rachis crimper is taken (with permission) from Synthetic Flies, 1980, by John Betts.

"1. Get the cheapest tweezers you can that are comfortable to use (Revlon square tipped eyebrow or X-Acto 4 1/2" - 5" pointed tip. I use the latter and like them better, but then I'm used to them). On the pointed tipped pair, the points must be removed (Fig. 1) and the ends made square. The square end should be about 3/16" across. Bevel one jaw to the shape shown. Check with a magnifying glass. I use a small (7") milling file to do this (Fig. 2).

"2. Bend about 1/8" of the beveled jaw down at a right angle (Fig. 3). Do this slowly. The steel is mild but not strong and may snap - for this reason two sets of tweezers are a sensible purchase. The plated finish of the steel will also crack and flake off - don't worry about it. This right angle bend forms the "tooth".

"3. Squeeze the tweezers together and clip the underjaw back to the outside of the tooth. Then with a file bevel the underjaw - the "anvil" - back until the upper edge is just beyond flush with the outside of the tooth (Fig. 4). Using very fine (400 grit) emery, put it between the tooth and anvil and pull it through them. Do this 3 or 4 times with the grit on the tooth side and then 3 or 4 times with the grit on the anvil side. Don't squeeze the jaws together too hard or the tooth will tear the paper. However, apply enough pressure to cause abrasion. The edge on the tooth will flatten a little, restore it to its rounded bevel. The emery "wears" the jaws together.

"4. With a buffing wheel and polishing compound polish the tooth and the anvil. Both must be smooth and free from sharp burrs or corners on their pressure surfaces.

"Check this with a magnifying glass. Also check to see that the anvil meets the tooth over most of its beveled edge (Fig. 5). If it doesn't - it must. The correction of a "miss" may be accomplished by simply twisting one of the tweezer jaws or worse redressing the tooth to fit. In the anvil jaw, the inside surface may be slightly dished. This is due to stamping. Sometimes you can get away with pounding it out (flat), at other times it may have to be filed flat. Take your time making them. They'll last indefinitely and are very useful for all sorts of things.

"5. Put a fiber between the tooth and the anvil so that the tooth will come down at a right angle to the fiber shaft. Squeeze - the fiber is now crimped (Fig. 6). What happens is that the tooth puts a dent in one side of the fiber shaft. The fiber will always bend to the side the dent or crimp is on and at right angles to the dent (Fig 7)."

I know, I know. You perform the same crimping action with a well aimed fingernail pressed against the feather and the pad of your thumb. It works, and fingernails are: free, hard to lose and always convenient. Very well, try this with your fancy freeloading fingernail - crip the feather after it has been tied in.

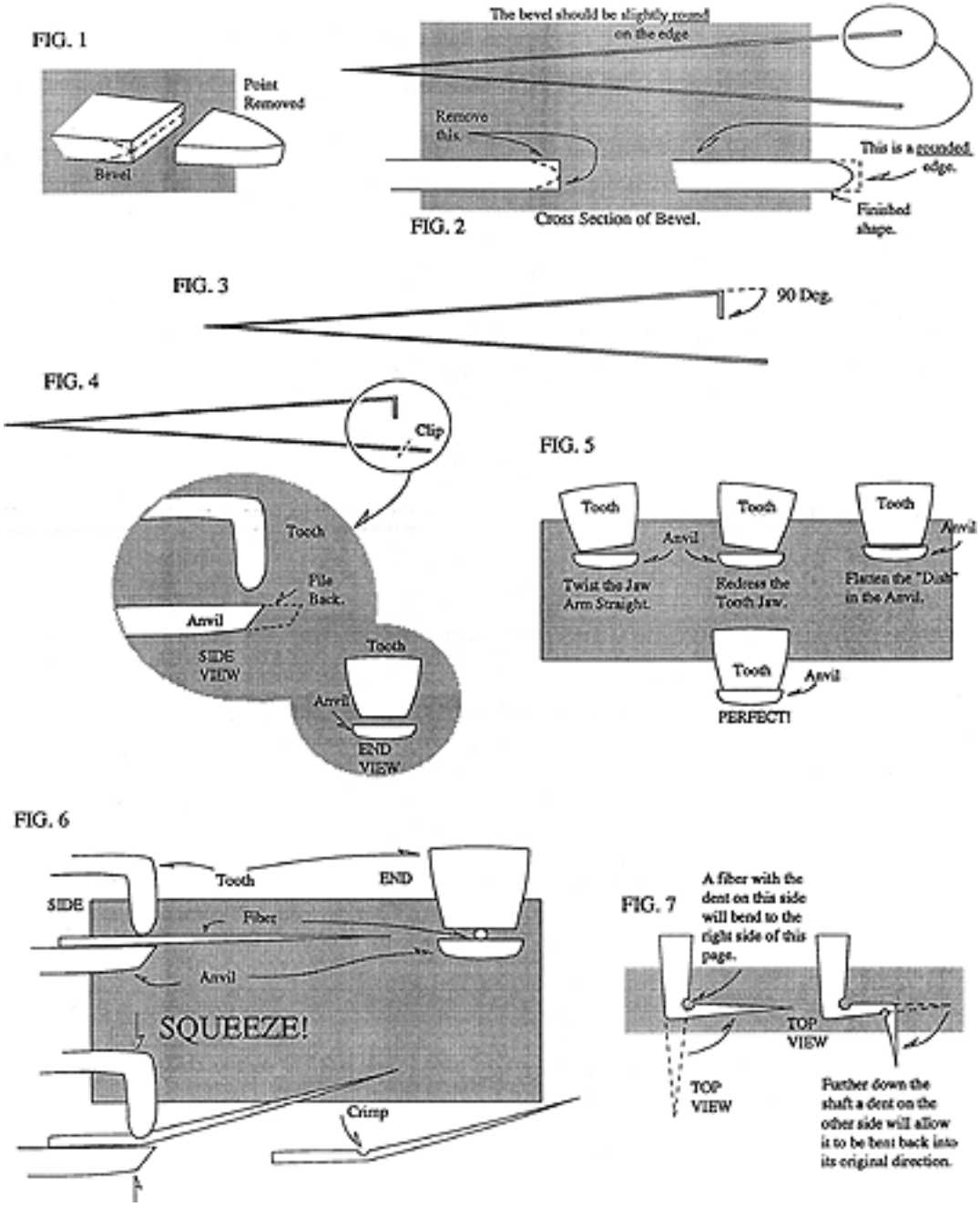
You may wish to modify the basic rachis crimper by cushioning the anvil. John finds that the rachis is less likely to roll out of position if the anvil is covered with a resilient material. I was cutting a lot of feathers in half so needed something to soften my heavy handedness. John prefers vinyl tubing, I use heat-shrink tubing.

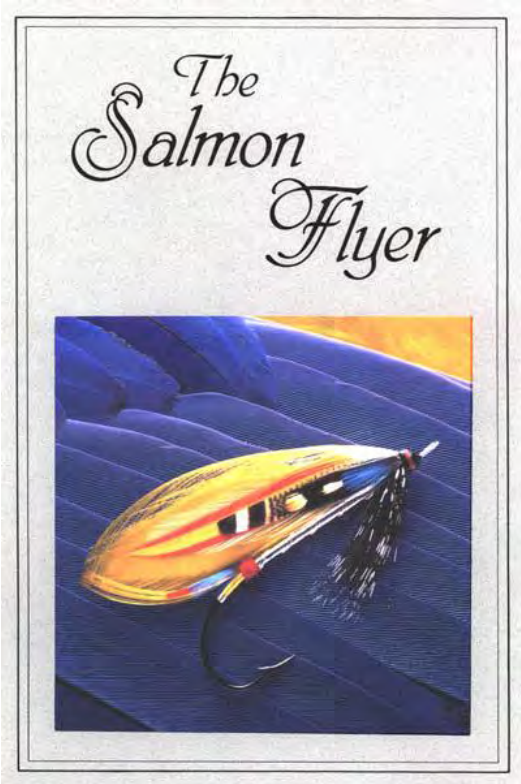
Check the tying tips column in the Winter, 1989 issue of Fly Tyer Magazine (now American Angler and a shadow of its former self). You will find instructions for making a hair packer out of a pair of tweezers. Actually, when I submitted the article I used the (perfectly legitimate) term forceps. This lead to much confusion on the part of the editor who confused forceps with hemostats, thus confusing the readership. I even sent drawings, as editors are easily confused (except of course you, Mike) (You don't know me very well, Marv! - Ed.). All of this confusion was corrected when the same tool appeared in Fly-Tying Tips (1990, Dick Stewart). If you cannot find the magazine or the book, find another pair of forceps, pardon me, tweezers, and modify them as follows: bend both squared off tips toward each other at right angle. File a notch in both tips. The notches in my model form a hole of about one sixteenth inch when the tips are pressed together. Dress and smooth the tips and notches.

If all that is more bother than it is worth you have another option. Christopher Helm markets an identical item, used for packing deer hair, called a Brassie (which is the same name as an old Scottish golf club! - Ed.) Many fly shops and catalogs carry them.

Since few salmon flies, particularly Victorian classics, call for packed deer hair, where is this leading? Toward something truly esoteric, natch. This tool only looks like a hair packer. Actually it is a gut crimper. I like to form twisted gut eyes around a bobbin tube but use whatever suits you. Bend the gut around the tube then pinch the legs of the gut tightly together in the hole formed by the notches in your crimper. Squeeze firmly, pull the bobbin out, and you have a perfect loop. I take the process one step further. Still holding the gut loop in the crimper, wrap a few turns of thread and a whip finish around the neck of the loop. Stored this way the loops take a set and behave better when tied in.

You may have notice that I seem to have an obsession for crimpers. First it was Indian Crow Crimpers, now its Rachis Crimpers and Gut Crimpers. I still have my blasting cap crimpers from my days in the bomb squad. Has to be a tying tool in there somewhere.





COLONEL BATES
Dressed by Bob Warren

A CURE FOR SPARSE WINGS

Tom Juracek

When you sit down at the vise you have a number of options facing you regarding the style you use to tie a salmon fly. You can choose high wing, low wing, long, short, just about anything that matches the style of hook that you have selected. But one thing seems to remain constant among today's tyers. How the wing is made up.

No matter the number and quantity of ingredients called for in the dressing, the tyer simply attempts to marry them together and attach them to the hook in one gigantic pull of the thread. Maybe the "shoulders" of duck feathers warrant inclusion in the wing proper, all materials seem to be married together and knotted to the hook.

The origination of this style of tying seems to be with Pryce-Tannatt. I am sure there are other historians of the salmon fly who could find references with which I am not familiar, but for the most part Pryce-Tannatt seems to have popularized this style of attaching the wing. I do not believe that it is coincidental that Pryce-Tannatt liked to tie in this style and that the patterns listed in his book also call for significant increases in the amount of wing material in a fly. In order to build a wing of sufficient quantity to look good on a hook and take up the allotted space, a generous amount of material is required if you are going to crush all of it onto the iron at the same time.

If you tie in this style all of the time, you have no doubt encountered the problem of anemic looking wings when you attempt to dress some of the older patterns. Why? Because the older flies were not dressed in this manner and often times do not have sufficient wing ingredients to be tied in this method. Kelson in his magazine articles was supposedly the first to popularize the "mixed" wing style of dressing. While today's tyer may not generally put the wing together in individual strands as suggested by Kelson, the principal idea of marrying the different fibers together and attaching them to the hook all at once has continued. Further, if feathers are not of the required length, they are put on as a second wing outside of the first; the modern shoulder.

Let's address a particular fly, The Captain. I have seen perhaps 3 or 4 examples of this fly by other tyers and I have tied it 3 or 4 times. The same thing invariably happens. The wing is anemic. This is caused by two items. First, there is not butt in the fly. This makes the rear end of the fly less "bulky" than most flies that contain butts. Second, the dressing does not call for an underwing. All the wing materials are simply listed. Or are they? (I am treading on some very dangerous ground here!) There is actually a semi-colon within the lising of materials. Does this mean that some materials belong as an underwing and some as the main wing? Remember, underwings are not generally separated from the main wing components in Kelson's listings for patterns.

So, how to fix the Captain. First, don't tie the tail veiling in as a single feather laying on top of the crest. Use two feathers back to back. Any conincidence to the fact that this is how the fly appears in the plates in Kelson's book? Probably not. Way too coincidental. Using the two feathers back to back creates the illusion of bulk at the back of the fly and helps to fill in the wing area. How many flies do you see today that use two feathers back to back as the tail veiling? I see hardly any. Maybe one fly out of seventy-five that calls for a tail veiling. Almost every author of a salmon fly book has addressed tying in two feathers back to back as a tail veiling method, yet it seems to have been lost as a employed by modern tyers. Why? Material hoarding and preservation?

Second, tie a built wing. Oh, I know, we are so concerned with head size that we have elected to ignore old tying methods because the head ends up looking too large. If you can't make the head the size of a period, then your fly belongs in the gutter. There is no reason why the wing components on the Captain cannot be separated into a wing and an underwing. Remember, built wings were the only way salmon flies were tied for years. Select one or two materials that will show nicely in the underwing and tie them in. May I suggest the Amherst pheasant and Golden pheasant? Or perhaps the Peacock wing (which is generally shorter in barb length and may make a nice underwing) and the Amherst pheasant. Having tied in an underwing, now make up a main wing using the remainder of the listed materials.

You can always combine the two suggestions. If you elect to tie two feathers back to back as the tail veiling, you have some space to be taken up before the main wing can be extended past the veiling to the tail. Why not take up this space with some of the shorter materials called for in the dressing? Maybe the Teal, Pintail and Gallina called for in the dressing should occupy this space rather than being placed on in the "traditional" shoulder position. They are short and they will show nicely. They may be a little difficult to work with, but there are solutions to that problem. Tie in an underwing of Amherst pheasant. Place the shorter feathers alongside the underwing as shoulders and utilize the underwing to support them. Then tie in the main wing composed of the remaining materials. Get these to lay just above the duck feathers and you will have a nice wing with plenty of height.

There are a number of other patterns where the same alternatives I have listed here can be employed to your advantage.

One might be the Blue Baron. Here is a pattern that calls for all of four wing materials. Golden pheasant tippets and tail (in strands), blue and claret Swan. Not a lot of choices or options here for making a wing for a size 4/0 fly. Is there a way around it? Sure. The tail calls for a topping and Chatterer. Tie in two feathers back to back to increase material quantity at the back of the fly. Tie in your tippet strands so that they are sufficiently high to match the height of the tail veiling. Now tie in a wing of roughtly a dozen (or more) Golden pheasant fibers from the tail Finally marry the Swan together and tie this in as the final portion of the wing. That's about three wings for this fly, but you should be able to keep the head in appropriate size because Mallard, Jungle Cock and a topping are all that remain to be added.

The Dawson. Here is a fly that appears to have a lot of material in the wing, yet can also end up looking thin. We have light and dark Turkey, blue, yellow and red colored sections, Teal, Grey Mallard and Golden pheasant tail. Throw out the. Mallard and Teal because we will tie them as shoulders (in deference to Pryce-Tannatt) and we have six materials left. Three strands of each and we have a wing that is only 18 strands high. Not nearly enough for a 2/0 or 3/0 hook. What to do? Well we could increase strand count for some of the materials, but that may alter the complexion of the fly and present an ugly appearance. Do we make an underwing? One is not listed and does not appear to be called for in the dressing. Maybe we should alter the body construction. This fly is a jointed body fly that calls for Indian Crow veilings over a tinsel body. Maybe we should place the body veilings back to back. The rear half of the body and the front half of the body both need the veiling placed back to back. With the simple light blue throat hackle, this will help provide size to the entire fly. Then we could either select certain materials and tie and underwing with them, or tie a wing with all of the materials married together. Either

way we have provided bulk to the upper part of the fly be altering the method we used to tie in the body veilings.

Don't alway try to force a pattern into a tying convention. Explore all of the different methods available to you. Many times, using methods outside the scope of the "modern" salmon fly results in a fly that is much nicer in appearance. And, finally, don't be afraid of tying built wings.

HOOK CONVERSIONS

Ted Roubal

Making blind-eye hooks from return loop-eye hooks is not difficult. You'll need a propane torch, an old needle nose pliers (the older and beat up the better ... you'll end up heating the pliers in the process), an electric hand drill (or a small metal lathe like the Unimat), 600 grit wet-dry sandpaper and the kitchen oven.

Grasp the end of the return loop with the pliers and heat the bend to a red heat, while taking out most of the bend at the same time. With heating and reworking, make the hook as straight and kink free as possible (keeping the area being worked on at a near red heat, otherwise the hook may break). Moreover, work as quickly as possible. Don't leave the hook in the flame any longer than necessary; overheating can weaken the metal.

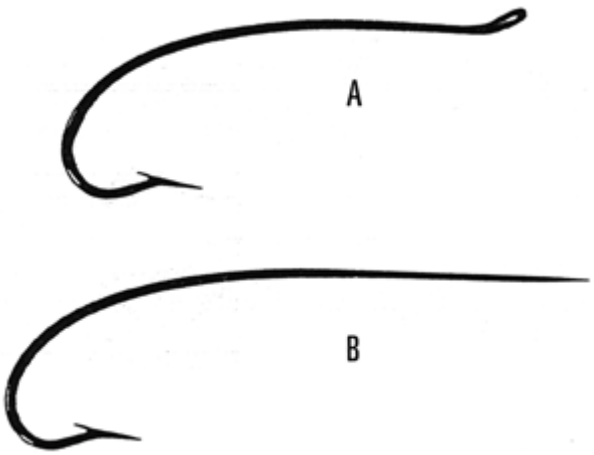
Now heat the entire reworked area red hot and allow the metal to cool. Holding the hook with one hand, position it on a flat piece of steel or a small anvil and pound out remaining kinks with gentle blows of a hammer. Now heat the entire reworked area red hot and immediately drop the hook into cold water. Grasp the hook by the bend in the jaws of the drill or 3-jaw lathe chuck, positioning it so that it rotates as concentricly as possible without a lot of wobble, and sand the reworked area to a shiny smoothness (a 1" diameter fine grit rubberized abrasive wheel in a Dremel Tool in conjunction with hook rotation really speeds things along here).

Then place the hook on a piece of aluminum foil and put this in the oven at 450 degrees F for 15 minutes. Before it has a chance to cool, remove the hook and quickly drop it into cold water.

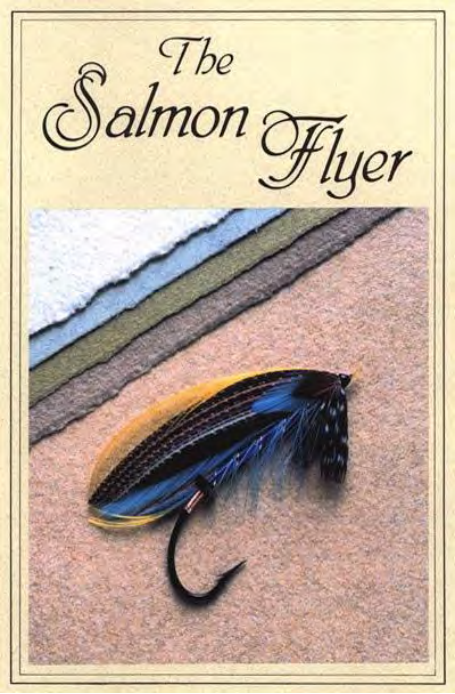
Oven-heating and quenching will return the hook to a blue-black oxidized finish and the hook will now have its original springy hardness.

Diagram "A" shows a typical hook before reworking.

Diagram "B" shows the same hook after rebending and reworking



The Salmon Flyer
Vol. 6 - No. 1, Winter, 1994



ALAINA
Designed and Dressed by John Olshewsky, and named for his daughter

TINSEL-ITIS

Tom Juracek

Having a little trouble with those tinsel bodies? Hopefully the following suggestions and observations will put you on your way to making bodies that glisten in the sun and appear to be plated onto the hook. This is what has worked for me.

I guess we should start by defining what makes up a good tinsel body (at least to me). First, no gaps in the turns of tinsel. Second, an even appearance to the body where light reflections are consistent throughout. Third, if there is a pattern to the body (and there generally will be with both oval and embossed tinsel) the pattern is repetitive. Finally, there is a smooth appearance to the taper or shape of the body.

The selection of the hook plays an important part in the tinsel body. When you select your hook examine it closely. If there are any imperfections in the finish to the hook, they must be removed. This may be bubbles in the japanning or painting, an uneven taper or too drastic of a taper, or simply an uneven thickness in the finish of the wire. All of these factors need to be accounted for. Take a small knife and scrape off any imperfections in the finish. Try to get the hook as smooth as possible before you even attach the tying silk. I recently tried using a hook that had a minor lump in the finish. Although the hook surface was "smooth" and there was tying silk under the tinsel, the lump in the finish made it impossible for two consecutive turns to meet snugly along the hook shank. The lump slightly forced the tinsel to stand at an angle from the hook shank and a gap was formed between the turns. Examine your hook carefully before proceeding, and don't forget to look at the far side.

When tying in flat tinsel I like a long taper to the tip. I tie in as little as I tie in as little as possible and try to get the tie-in to be on the far side of the hook, not on top. The tip section of the tinsel should be smaller in width than the turn of tinsel that will cover it. Try to make the tie-in point in such a manner that

it takes no more that the first two turns of tinsel to cover it. Do we start at the fore or aft of the body? I use both places. I tie in at the rear when doing multiple sectioned bodies or when I want a thin body. I tie in at the front when making a thick or tapered body. Remember when tying in at the front of the hook the taper on the tip of the tinsel should be pointing towards the eye rather than the tail. In either method, the first two turns are the most critical. They must start neatly and et the tinsel coming up and over the hook shank as near to vertical as possible. This is much easier to accomplish if you have a long taper to work with rather than a short one.

Why start at the head when making a tapered body? It is my experience that almost no matter how hard or neat the underlying floss body, (which is what I generally use) when you crank on that tinsel you can firm up the floss even more. It seems to almost bite into the underbody. This causes a slight loosening of the floss and can result in lumps that need to be covered. In advancing rearward at first, you can carefully cover and smooth the floss should it take on any lumps or divots from winding the tinsel thus leaving a perfectly smooth surface to wind the tinsel over on the way back to the head. One of the most frustrating things you can end up with is a body that shows no gaps in the tinsel but still looks terrible. Why? Part of what makes a good tinsel body is the way light reflects off it. When the tinsel is not flowing around the hook in a consistent manner, awkward light reflections cause the body to look poorer than it may actually be. Picture, for example a glass jar lying on its side. The light reflections from the jar suggest a smooth level surface. Now imagine a divot in the side of the jar. The surface is still smooth, but no longer level and you can see the dip in the surface simply by the way the light reflects from it. I have found the most common cause of this to be the ribbing tinsel that is tied in before the body is formed. If you tie in a ribbing tinsel, it must consistently lay in exactly the same place along the hook shank. Next time you attack a tinsel body with ribbing, tie in the ribbing in the usual manner (probably under the hook shank) and wind the thread forward. When you have reached the throat, flip the hook over and look to see how the ribbing tinsel is laying. More than likely it will resemble a snake. If this is the case and you wind flat tinsel over this shape, you may end up with a body that has no gaps but does have inconsistent light reflections. I hope I have adequately described this phenomenon; suffice it to say that the underlying ribbing tinsel must be in a perfectly straight line. Unwrap and rewrap until it is.

What about tying in the hackle that is to be wound over the tinsel body? A couple of thoughts: my experience indicates you have two choices here. You can trim the tip of the feather of all barbs and simply tie in the stem, or you can leave all the barbs intact and tie in the doubled feather. Either way you should not shorten the length of the tip that is available to be tied in. If I elect to trim the barbs off the tip, I still leave the last three or four on each side at the tip. I will explain why in a moment. Leaving the barbs on the section to be tied in will make a thicker body than trimming the barbs. I have found that by leaving the barbs you have a much better chance of making a smooth body. The barbs will help keep the surface under the tinsel smooth and round. By leaving them all on, or by leaving the last few should you elect to trim the remainder, the tips will form a natural taper for you to wind the tinsel over and eliminate any gaps that may occur as a result of moving off the hackle and onto the underbody. If you leave the barbs on, they will also help to fill in some of the taper on the underside of the hook where it tapers into the head area. The barbs will also help get the tinsel to climb onto the gut eye. Remember the hackle tip should remain in the same location throughout the winding. Do not allow it to come up the near side or fall from the far side to under the hook shank. You will encounter the same look as we discussed above regarding the ribbing if you are not consistent with your placement of the section of hackle that is tied down. Another helpful pointer that occasionally happens: I mentioned not shortening the tip of the hackle. Occasionally this tip will be long enough to extend past the head of the fly. In such a case make sure that the tip is on the far side of the thread up at the throat. The thread hanging there will help keep the tip section you are winding over in the same place (you may not even have to move it or hold it) as you advance the tinsel up the body.

When you finish winding the flat tinsel on a body that will have a hackle over it, DO NOT cut off the tinsel. Wind the ribbing tinsel next and tie it off, again NOT cutting it. Finally wrap the hackle forward. This can make tying off the hackle a hassle at the throat because you will no doubt have a mass of material just hanging around their. However, should the tinsel cut the hackle (with that distinctive "PLINK" that we all know and love) you need only loosen the ribbing tinsel and unwind it, and then unwind the flat tinsel back to the point where the hackle was tied in. We are, since I forgot to mention it, tying in the hackle with the tinsel on our way from the rear of the fly to the throat, regardless of the body style selected. If you cut the ribbing and body tinsel before wrapping the hackle, you have no choice but to replace both pieces and the resulting aggravation will set you in a foul mood for hours (not to mention with a frayed thread that breaks). No sense in having that when it can be avoided.

When tying off flat tinsel I generally advance the tinsel over the thread at the tie in point, that is, continuing to wind forward past the tie in point. Then I carefully pick up the thread and wind it directly over the top of the hook securing the tinsel in place. This seems to result in a neater tie off. Needless to say, always be careful about thread tension when working around tinsel or the dreaded "plink" will occur.

When tying oval tinsel jointed bodies, such as a Torrish or Blue Baron, try the following to leave yourself a clean location for body veiling attachment. Tie in the oval tinsel and advance the thread to the desired location. Make sure the waste end of the oval tinsel extends at least this far. Again make sure that the section tied down is in a straight line. Upon reaching the designated coordinates with the thread remove 5 or 6 turns. Closely trim the waste end of the tinsel and rewind 4 or 5 turns of thread. This should place the thread on the bare shank for the last 2 turns. When you advance the oval tinsel forward (the same holds true for embossed tinsel) if you examine the tinsel carefully you will see there is a pattern to where the "breaks" in the tinsel fall. I find they usually repeat for about 2 or 3 turns, change locations, then start repeating again in the original location. This is probably a nuance only someone who has lost a few too many brain cells (like me) would even notice. Wind the oval tinsel forward completely covering the thread. The last turn or two of oval tinsel will be wound around only thread-covered shank. Tie off on the near side and trim very closely. Take your thumbnail and flatten the butt of the tinsel as much as possible. This will make a smoother surface for the herl to be wound over and increase your chances of obtaining a neat mid-body butt. By handling the tinsel in this manner you will find that the tie-in location for the body veilings both on top and bottom of the shank are identical. They are clean with no butts from the oval tinsel to deal with and the height the veilings must clear is the same on top and bottom. Since you wound the tinsel directly over the top of the shank, the angle of the tinsel is also consistent making it easier to center the veilings over the body.

Most of what I have covered here is also applicable to floss bodies. They can be handled in the same manner as the tinsel. Fortunately, floss is slightly more forgiving than tinsel as a material to work with. This makes obtaining a neat body a little easier.

I do hope the above suggestions will help the next time you attempt a tinsel body.

PREPARING FEATHERS FOR DYEING and USING THE PROPER WETTING AGENT

Ted Roubal

Success in dyeing requires a bit of careful prior preparation and the use of a proper wetting agent or surfactant (auxiliaries) when applying dyes. It has been my experience that feathers from fly shops are usually clean enough to be dyed without further ado. However, feathers for winging obtained in bulk from feather merchants are another story. Smelling strongly of napthalene and just plain dirty, they must be cleaned up first. The easiest way to accomplish this is to place them in a long, wide, shallow pan such as a roasting pan or similar container and allow them to spread out and soak in a solution of warm water containing a mild liquid detergent such as Dawn. The key here is to not crowd the feathers. Thus a long, wide container is much better than a tall pail for example.

An hour or two of soaking may be all that is required to clean up the feathers. However, if the feathers remain dull and dingy, I add 3% hydrogen peroxide (1 pint per gallon of solution) and allow the feathers to soak overnight. Then I rinse them twice in fresh warm water containing a little of the detergent.

The wet feathers can be transferred directly to your dyepot or you may wish to dry them and dye them later. Mike McCoy taught me a little trick when drying them. Namely, grasp the feather by the stem or rachis, and sweeping it under water, bring the body of the feather up against the side of the container. When you do this, the barbs will flatten out and adhere to the side of the container. This allows the barbs to line up and adhere to one another in much the same way when still on the bird. Now draw the feather up the side and out of the liquid. When the barbs resist alignment (as they may when feather quality is poor) it will help to give the feathers a quick up and down jerking motion as you remove them. Also, be sure to add just a little detergent to the rinse water in the container you're using. Then place the feathers on paper toweling to dry.

One of the keys to any successful dyeing session is the use of the proper wetting agent. Such an agent is Sythrapol. It is used almost exclusively for dyeing in the fiber arts (dyeing wool and silk fleece, fabrics and furs), and just possibly may be the best wetting agent available to the do-it-yourself dyer. It has the ability to cut through oils and greases in seconds, it provides excellent contact between dyes and fibers, wetting the latter immediately on contact with the dyebath and it is economical to use because you use so little each time. Sythrapol is added to the dyebath at the rate of 1/8 to 1/4 teaspoon per quart of dyebath. Then, when you're all through dyeing, remove the feathers from the rinse water containing a few drops of Sythrapol using the sweeping method described above. Synthrapol is available from artist's supply stores, fiber arts and weaver's supply shops and from stores selling dyes and dyeing supplies.

Another key to successful dyeing is to select and use the right class of dye for the job. There are a great many dyes to choose from and use successfully in fly tying. In fact dyes, dyeing and bleaching are the subject of a chapter by myself to appear in a forthcoming book by your editor, Mike Radencich. In the chapter we will cover in detail the properties and use of leveling, milling, supermilling and premetallized acid dyes, fiber reactive dyes, some of the old dyes (including picric acid) used in a bygone era, natural product colorants (natural dyes), free radical bleaching and the sources of dyes, bleach chemicals and the many auxiliaries that are used. Keep tuned in on this. This will be the most comprehensive coverage of dyes and dyeing yet to appear in a publication dealing with fly tying.

SHAPING CRESTS

John Alevras

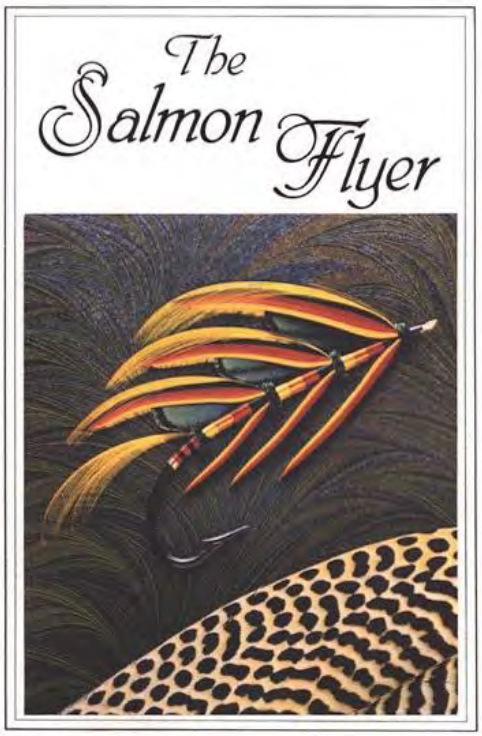
Thanks to Charlie Vestal, a member of our local Cotinga Club, and Marvin Nolte, a frequent and welcomed visitor to our monthly sessions, a simple idea was spawned in my mind to shape golden pheasant crests and other feathers. Charlie had machined a device that looked like a shot glass with grooves around its circumference which allowed crests to be placed into them thus shaping them to different curvatures. This was a clever idea but restrictive because the grooves prevented you from spreading the individual crest fibers for your tail, wing, or throat.

Marvin, who has a device or tool for everything (or is about invent one), simply uses different sized glasses to shape his crests and has a formula for size depending on whether it is a tail or a topping he is shaping. In a search to build on Marvin’ approach, I happened upon a very accessible and free-of-charge alternative at the local pharmacy.

The drug stores that I contacted were more than willing to provide plastic pill bottles in different sizes. I obtained 1 1/4, 1 5/8 and 7/8". There are other sizes available, but I found that these three sizes seemed to meet my needs the best.

Besides diversity of size, these vials offer several other features that are helpful. First, they nest inside each other to minimize storage space. Second, they are of a rusty orange color that contrasts with the gold of the crests, allowing one to easily see that the crest's stem is straight and the fibers are aligned as desired. Third, the bottles have lock nodes on the upper edge that secure the lids. These nodes serve nicely to keep the bottles from rolling around. We want to place them on their sides so that the crests will not droop as they are drying possibly causing an undesirable lateral curve in the stem.

This idea may not necessarily revolutionize your tying, but it will hopefully be of some value. Sometimes the simplest approaches provide the most sophisticated solutions.



THE EMPRESS' PET
Designed and Dressed by Mike Radencich

MOUNTING SALMON FLY WINGS

Stack Scoville

"We now come to the most difficult part of fly tying.[1]" This is the first sentence of Hale's chapter regarding winging of salmon flies. For me, in fact, the most difficult aspect of tying classic salmon flies has been setting the wing. In writing this article, I have two goals in mind. First, I want to compare, contrast and condense the techniques used by past and present tyers for mounting wings on classic salmon flies. Second, I hope that other novice tyers, such as myself, might advance in their tying skills and execute these steps with greater precision, rather than discovering by trial and error a good or better way of mounting salmon wings. I believe that practicing ineffective techniques over and over leads to perfection in doing it ineffectively. Hopefully, this article will prevent other tyers from "reinventing the wheel", and give them an understanding of the development of the various techniques. I would emphasize that this article is not intended to be dogmatic regarding technique. But if it generates any discussion, we all benefit.

In 1892, Hale publlished the book How to Tie Salmon Flies. In his book, he referred to two different types of wings which other, earlier tyers also discussed. These are built wings and mixed wings. Hale referred to single strip wings but I will not specifically deal with strip wings other than to say how they may relate to built and mixed wing techniques.

Hale's built wings consisted of an underwing and an overwing. In mounting the underwings, whether they were whole feathers or strips such as white-tipped turkey, he recommended that they be "tied in on top of the hook, both together in the same way as feathers for a jointed body... two or three turns of silk will be sufficient. If the stems of the feathers are thick, taper them slightly on the underside with a sharp knife. The taper should be a long one."[2] Hale preferred turkey for the Jock Scott tied at the side of the hook as the strips are lower and the head is smaller. "A turn or two of tying silk for each wing will be sufficient."[3] I surmise that "for each wing" means tying each strip separately. My conclusion is that for under wings, if whole feathers are used, are tied on simultaneously. If strips are used for underwings, such as in the Jock Scott, these strips are tied on separately in two different steps.

If tippet in strands is used as an underwing, they are tied in on top of the hook with the forefinger and thumb of the left hand grasping the hook and strands at the same time and utilizing a soft loop technique. The thread passes up between the left thumb and hook shank over the top of the strands away from the tyer, and between the tip of the forefinger and hook shank on the far side. Then the thumb and forefinger are squeezed gently against the hook while the tying silk is pulled down tight. In this technique, Hale does not advocate an extra half turn around the bottom of the hook and lifting upward to tighten the soft loop as other authors recommend. It seems to me, that without lifting upward to tighten, there would be a slight tendency for the tippet strands to "roll off" the far side of the hook. This apparently was not a problem for Hale, however.

In placing the overwing for built wings, Hale gives the following instructions: "Place the strip (note the word strip is singular - S.S.) against the side of the hook; wind a turn of silk; but before pulling it tight, press the thumb tightly onto the strips and silk, and don't remove the pressure until the silk is tight; two turns are sufficient. The left strips are tied on in the same way, the second forger being pressed down onto the silk and the strips before the former is pulled tight.[4] There is no mention of thread reversal in these steps. Hale goes on to point out that successive married strips of two to three colors are added. In the further description of adding strands or slips, each successive strip is placed higher up on top of the hook shank. It is my assumption then that this would lead to an overlapping of strips like shingles on a roof. I believe, however, that this assumption is subject to your own personal interpretation.

Moving on to mixed wings, Hale describes a technique where individual strands of different feathers are apparently randomly arranged and married into strips. There are three or four strips for the right wing and three or four strips for the left. He then recommends forming one broad strip by consolidating the three or four narrow strips made of randomly arranged married strands. A broad right and a broad left strip are thus formed.

The strips are then placed against one another side by side with the best sides of both outward "...so that they coincide, and form one double wing. The wing must now be tied on top of the hook in the manner described."[5] Hale refers to the just described soft loop technique. He goes on to state, "After you have wound four or five turns of silk, remove the left hand and pinch the root ends of the fibers onto the top of the hook. Then wind a turn or two more. The wings should then be perfectly upright, and not a single fiber standing out."[6]

We will find from other authors that the root ends of the fibers need to be worked back up onto the hook shank in order to make the wing sit both vertically as well as parallel to the hook shank. I would point out that the wing should not be released from a firm grip with the left thumb and forefinger until the roots have been thouroughly and, perhaps, even roughly or forcibly worked onto the top of the hook shank.

In 1895, Kelson wrote The Salmon Fly. In it, he also made a distinction between built wings and mixed wings. We start first with built wings with underwings. Kelson states, "The left forefinger and thumb grasp loosely (also from above and right up to the hackle tie) both the strips and the body of the fly. Then, working from the wrist, draw the left forefinger and thumb, with a curving movement over the wing, so as to conform it to the bend of the hook. Having done this, hold the strips close down upon the top of the body-work in the left grip."[7]

He continues, "I guide them (after they are grasped in the left forefinger and thumb) until they are well extended for tying down, the left hand being so level as to permit a tumbler resting on it,"[8] i.e., parallel to the hook shank or the floor. I believe that if the thumb and forefinger are not held parallel to the floor, but up at an angle, the wing may tend to cock up at an angle as well.

Kelson continues, "...proceed to tie down the wing thus: A turn of silk is passed lightly over the wing closest to the hackle and put into CATCH. Then, with these CATCH fingers, draw the silk gently taut downwards, while the right forefinger and thumb grasp the strips at the point of tie, so that the wing shall not be bent over to one side or the other, but sit regularly on edge when completed. This regularity is secured on the one hand by grasping, and on the other, by keeping the other end of the strips strictly in position by a well sustained pressure of the left forefinger and thumb, while the silk is being pulled taut. Maintain the left pressure, and before putting further turns of silk headwards, lift up the waste ends on top of the hook. This lifting serves a double purpose. In the first place, it so effects the strips that they 'sit down' close along the body work, leaving little space between them and the butt; and secondly, it helps to keep them in the desired position when the fly is finished. The waste ends are taken into one grasp and somewhat forcibly made to rest on the shank, instead of posing by the side of it give further turns..."[9]

Kelson then recommends that the waste ends of the underwing be cut off. Some modem tyers suggest that the underwing waste not be cut off but allow it to serve as a platform for mounting the overwing.

The overwing is placed as a far wing and as a separate near wing. For the far wing, Kelson states, "Take in the right forefinger and thumb the married strips intended for the far side wing, and lay them bright side out, with their root ends against the shank at the tying point, and at such an angle to the shank that, not only the lower edges of married strips may conform themselves to the upper curve of the underwing, but also that the tip shall extend in gradation beyond its extreme point."[10] At this point, Kelson describes a technique for humping the wing.

Referring to the far wing, he continues, "Seize with left forefinger and thumb the main part of the strips... then: ...keep the fibers in their regular, natural order and not overlapping each other, pass the silk around them, but not as if you were running cord around a parcel. The silk must be passed loosely, the STOP finger must be pressed down from above against it, and be kept firm whilst the silk is drawn fairly taut... place silk again over the far side, give another turn, tighter still... keep all fibers in position... with the right forefinger and thumb, lift up the waste ends of the strips of the wing upon the top of the shank."11]

Kelson describes mounting the near wing in this manner... "The near wing strips are similarly laid on and treated," except, "make the left thumb serve the same purpose as the STOP finger in the former instance, that is to say, the thumb presses the part of the strip that is to be tied down from above without relaxing the pressure, so the thumb is slightly drawn back out of the way temporarily, in order that the tying silk may be placed over and the work continued."[12] Kelson does refer to the technique of reversing the thread and mounting the near wing by wrapping the thread toward the tyer over the top but he does not advocate it.

I certainly cannot understand the logic of utilizing a reverse wrap, that is, wrapping over the top of the hook shank toward the tyer for mounting the near wing. There is some logic for this technique in tying down the far wing so that with each wing mounted independently, the wraps would make each wing tend to roll towards the center of the hook shank, toward its mate.

For mixed wings, Kelson describes the process of creating strips or "slips" of fibers which, I believe, he has married one by one. He then creates a "skin" by combining two or more "slips". The outer skins are composed of shorter fibers such as "teal, ibis, gallina, tippet, powder blue macaw and summer duck."[13] The inner skins are composed of longer fibers such as "peacock wing, golden pheasant tail, turkey, bustard and swan dyed..."[14] The inner skins are formed as previously described "...manipulating their parts so that they shall gradually increase in length towards the top of the wing. Put each of these two new made up sets (read: "inner skins" - S.S.) on the inner side of the two skins, taking care that, in so doing, their points extend beyond the others to the length of the wing desired.

"The right and left wing, so composed, that is to say, enveloping the 'two new made up sets' are now put together 'back to back' and tied on the hook by the following method...

"...Seize the whole wing by the roots with the right hand and measure the proper length of the wing by offering them to the hook. Now hold the wings and the hook in the left hand, the fingers being straight with (read: "parallel with" - S.S.) the shank. The fingers and hook shank being now in a horizontal position (see Figure 1), release tying-silk and pass it first round the left little finger from point O towards you to X, then up, under the left thumb, over the wings, and under the forefinger grip. Now pull X - X together until the wings are gently and symmetrically brought straight down upon the hook and into place, maintaining the grip of the left hand upon them throughout. Remove little finger ... not the left grip...bind with three more turns in the usual way, headwards..."[15]

Kelson goes on to explain "...by pulling X - X together, with due care, all tilting is obviated, and the wings are drawn evenly down into their permanent position on top of the shank. The first turn of silk should rest close against the throat hackle and go straight up over the wings. It must not pass beyond that turn (tailwards) in subsequent fixing."[16]

This technique by Kelson introduces a procedure for mounting both the right and left wings simultaneously and minimizing the tendency for the wing to roll off the far side. This may be the first description of a soft loop, even though it is brought tight by thread pressure from below.

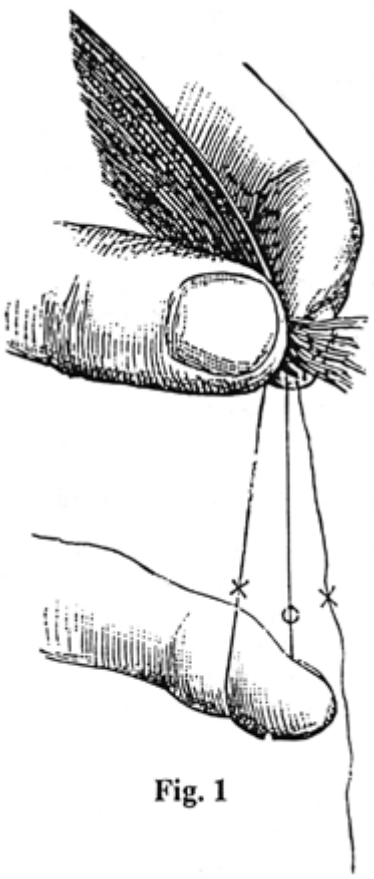


Fig. 1

In 1914, T.E. Pryce-TannPatt published How to Dress Salmon Flies. Pryce-Tannatt is not as specific in his instructions as some of the earlier authors. He does not address the technique for married wings but says the "manipulations are similar in general principle to those already described..."[17]

I believe that the technique he describes for mounting vertical strip wings is what he intends for married wings. As he describes, "In this method, both wings are tied on together at the same time, and as is the case with all wings which are dressed in this way, it will be found that reversing the silk will help considerably in making the wings sit in the proper way."[18] He does not explain further why he believes that this is the case. I assume he prefers this 1 technique to prevent the far wing from tending to roll off the far side.Having advanced the tying silk to a point "just a fraction" from the end of the bare shank to the eye, "hitch the silk between the gut loop and the small portion of bare hook shank still left exposed and wind in tight and even coils in the reverse way back until the roots of the hackle are reached.

"...Grip the strips, keeping them in a horizontal position with the left forefinger and thumb, and then tie them in with precisely the same manipulation described in tying in the tail; (see below - S.S.) not forgetting, of course, that the turns of silk in this case will be in the opposite direction - i.e., over the hook and towards you. The first turn of silk should be close up to the hackle and the next and subsequent turns closely, evenly, and firmly applied to the right."[19] Pryce-Tannatt points out that it is most important to keep the feathers all in the same vertical position.

His technique for tying in a feather fiber tail are as follows: "Throw a loose turn of silk over, and having grasped the fibers to the left of, and close up to, this turn of silk with left forefinger and thumb, hold the silk in CATCH and pull it gradually tight... It is important to keep the opposed strips on edge - i.e., in a vertical plane - throughout the whole manipulation... This can be done by keeping the forefinger and thumb of both hands touching each other whilst the silk is being drawn tight."[20]

In 1931, Salmon Fishing was written by Eric Taverner. This text largely reiterated, with minor variations, the techniques of previous tyers' published works. Taverner, however, makes some interesting points relating to mounting wings. The only technique for mounting wings which he gives explicit instructions is for strip wings. I believe, as I have stated before, that this technique is probably applicable to married strips.

Taverner states "...Construct a foundation of silk upon which the wings may rest; if this is left out, the wings are very apt to stick up in the air, because the silk will pull down part of the fibers into a hollow between the turns of silk and the rest will be raised against the fulcrum of the hackle-seating. Wind the silk in even turns to the head and back again as far as the point where the hackle has been fastened off. Take up the pair of strips between the left forefinger and thumb; adjust them until the outer parts of the web cover one another accurately; place them vertically over the shank in what is judged to be the correct position; change hands and pass the tying silk over the strips at the point where the actual fastening is to be done; grip the strips and the silk firmly and draw the silk tight and with it the fibers which are thereby compressed. Still holding the strips in position, bring the silk around again over them and to the right of and hard up against the preceding coil. Then lift up the ends of the fibers; take a turn under them; remove the waste with a slanting cut; whip to the eye and back again; and finish off with the whip-finish... It is better to take the silk under the waste as it will grip the foundation firmly and hold the two important turns in place. There is always a chance of turns out over the roots slipping forward and letting the first turns go slack."[21]

Fig. 2

Taverner also provides an interesting illustration (see Figure 2) which is take from the notes made by A. H. Gribble on Kelson's system of fly tying. The method is identified in the accompanying illustration. As mentioned previously, Kelson's technique may be one of the earlier references to what is actually a soft loop.

Elsewhere in Taverner's contribution, there is an interesting set of illustrations that, I believe, shows the historical development of mounting mixed wings (see Figure 3). It begins with Blacker's technique in 1855 followed by Rogan's in 1880. Then comes Hale with two techniques in 1892 and Kelson in 1895. Finally Crossfield in 1910 has a method similar to that of Rogan. Although it is not clearly stated by Taverner, I would guess that the Rogan-Crossfield technique involved securing a limited number of strands to the hook shank and then perhaps marrying each successive few strands to the already previously mounted strands. This would certainly serve to minimize the size of the head, especially if a turn or two of hackle were taken in front of the last wing component and then sides and/or cheeks were utilized to cover the bindings of the wing fibers. It seems to me that this would be a cumbersome technique for producing a married wing but the head would be extremely small, which, for some tyers, is clearly aesthetically pleasing.

The next major reference was published in 1978 and authored by Poul Jorgensen. His book entitled Salmon Flies, Their Character, Style and Dressing outlines instructions for underwings as well as overwings. His instructions for the strip wing technique involve tying the right and left strips on individually and reversing the thread for the far wing. Jorgensen's instructions are as follows: The near strip is grasped in the left hand... "place your index finger on the far side of the hook and hold the feather strip against the hook with your thumb on the near side. The finger should be positioned so the first turn of thread will fall directly in front of and close to the fingertips. Hold the feather strip tightly with your forgers... then take the first turn of tying thread slowly over the wing strip, while your index finger prevents it from being pulled over the top of the hook. Allow the thread to roll the upper edge of the wing slightly so that it falls in the middle, longitudinally, of the hook shank. Now take a second complete turn of thread and come all the way around so both the thread and bobbin are above the wing. At this point, tighten the thread windings with the slow upward pull while holding the wing strip firmly in place; then

add three or four more turns to secure it tightly. Hold the wing while trimming the surplus end directly across close to the windings." [22] Jorgensen points out that the wing is sitting slightly down on the side and not directly on top of the hook. "and that there is still space remaining for the head.[23]

Jorgensen than gives instructions for reversing the thread as follows: bring the thread over the top of the hook shank and down the far side, to the tip of a bodkin (or finger), make a loop over the bodkin, and return the thread back up the far side of the hook shank and over the top toward the tyer. Then take several wraps around this loop until it is secure to the hook shank much as creating a dubbing loop. The empty loop is then cut off and the thread can be wrapped toward the tyer over the top of the hook shank to secure the far wing. The process is then reversed when the far wing has been mounted. The far wing is tied in a similar fashion to the near wing. This appears to be Jorgensen's technique for mounting strip wings either as the underwing or the overwing.

His technique for mounting whole feather wings involves placing the feathers back to back and securing them to the hook shank simultaneously. he then advocates cutting the surplus stems while holding the wing in place and applying a drop of head cement.

In tying the built wing flies, such as the Black Doctor, Jorgensen applies tippet in strands as an underwing and then follows with golden pheasant strips as an underwing but these are applied simultaneously, unlike the strips of turkey previously described in other flies. Again, Jorgensen uses a "soft loop technique". He draws the loop down tight by upward pressure of the thread passing between the thumb and near wing. The married main wing strips are then tied on, according to Jorgensen, using the method just explained for the underwing strips.

In 1987, Fly-Tying Methods by Darrel Martin was published. In this book, Martin describes the Langley wing loop method. It was apparently created by Ken Langley and first explained in the "Fly Dressers' Guild Newsletter", Nulmber One, 1985. Martin points out "several advantages (of the Langley Loop) over traditional methods: 1) It creates a thread loop for compressing or "stacking" the fibers vertically; 2) It permits positioning of the wings during the mounting process; 3) It allows observation while placing and compressing the wings."[24] In this method, the Langley Loop begins with wrapping about twenty edge to edge wraps immediately behind the eye apparently to form a thread base. Then "...after wrapping the thread foundation, a four inch thread length is exposed between the shank and the bobbin. With the left index finger held one and one-half inches above and parallel to the shank, loop the thread over the finger and down the far side of the shank. Bobbin weight maintains thread tension.

"Next matched wing slips are positioned in the loop and held by the right hand directly on top of the shank. The wings are held firmly between the thumb and the middle finger of the left hand, trapping the thread on the far side exactly opposite the thread on the near side.

"Accurately match and position the wing slips. To view the wing placement, drop the left thumb while trapping the wings in the tight 'crotch' of the thread. Reposition the left thumb against the wing before continuing.

"Now slip the index finger out of the loop and release the wing butts with the right hand. The left thumb and index finger pressed laterally against the wing slips as the thread is drawn down, stacking the fibers directly on top of each other.

"While the middle finger firmly presses against the hook, the left thumb drops down to reveal the initial compression of wing fibers. If splitting of the wing fibers occurs, the wings are corrected or removed. If no problems appear, then, with the left middle finger still against the wings, another loop is made over the index finger, directly in front of the previous wrap. Again, the far strand of the loop is positioned directly opposite the near strand. As before, hold the shank and wings, remove the left index finger from the loop, and draw the thread down over the wings. Follow with a third finger loop. After tightening the loop as mentioned, hold the wings firmly while the wing butts are trimmed. Finish the head wraps and whip to complete. This method, especially appropriate for traditional wet wings, plants the wings directly on top of the shank."[25]

This again appears to be another but interesting variation of the soft loop method. The advantage of this method appears to be the accurate positioning of the wing during the tying process. With the traditional soft loop technique, the tailward end of the wing is usually obscured by the thumb and hand as they hold the wing in position. The Langley Loop method allows for intermittent observation of the positioning of the tip of the wing during the tie down process.

In March-April 1981, Bill Hunter published an article in "Rod and Reel". In that article, he gave a pictorial description of his technique for tying a Green Highlander. In the instructions for the article, he referred to a "loose-loop" capture technique. Setting the underwing was also equally vaguely described with the words "secure tippets in place with three to four turns of thread."[26]

What is not said in Hunter's article may be more important than what is. In the photographs, it appears as though the butts of the underwing are left uncut until the main wing has been secured. This perhaps allows for a larger platform on which to mount the main wing.

In a recent personal communication from Hunter, he further expounds upon the technique he utilized in the early 1980's. Accordingly, "...Set a wing on top of the hook, held by the thumb and forefinger of the serving hand. While lightly squeezing the two wing sections in towards one another as well as the hook shank... wrap a couple of loose turns of thread about the wing butts, and tighten these loops with a smooth upward tug on the thread.

"... Imagine that you could divide the tips of your fingers in two sections - a rearward part and a forward part. The rearward part of your fingertips would apply pressure against the wing sections pressing them together and downward towards the hook. While this is going on, the forward part of the thumbs and fingertips would loosen just enough to allow the thread to slide down against the wing sections, pulling them down against the hook. The tip of the forefinger, however, would continue to exert some pressure against the wing sections to counteract the circular motion of the thread compression preventing the wing from folding.

"Once the wing is compressed, the serving hand continues to hold the wing sections in place while the butts of the wing are twisted and squared up on top of the hook by the tying hand. This finished ... apply a few more turns of thread and then remove the serving hand.

"Thus technique would often produce a wing which bore an exaggerated shoulder or sharply angled hump at its front and then flow rearward in a flat line.[27]

Hunter is not fond of this exaggerated shoulder since the fly does not swim well and according to him "looked a bit pretentious." Subsequently he has developed a different technique for securing wings to the hook. To continue, "I tie wings on by first being sure all the fibers are in a more or less straight and relaxed line, with just a slight 'hump' imparted in their set before mounting them on the hook.

"I place the far wing on the hook first and then the near one, lining the two up... setting them pretty much in the position I want them to be when attached. Since the feathers will 'spring' upward a bit after being tied on, I set them just a bit lower than the final desired angle.

"I set the wings in place on top of the hook, grasping them by the fingertips of the thumb and forefinger of the serving hand, which are also grasping the hook shank ever so slightly. Now I push the wing sections downward against the hook shank, while squeezing them together.

"...what I am doing is pushing the wing mass downward, compressing it from its vertical profile straight down in a Accordion-like manner, without allowing the sections to twist or roll outside the hook shank area. This effort will actually convert the tie-in area of the wing from a high, stiff vertical to a soft, miniscule, round sheaf of feather fibers.

"I find that using two hands works best, first compressing a little bit with the serving hand. I next grasp the butts of the wing with tying hand, holding the compression thus far attained.

"Then I re-grasp the wing with the serving hand, releasing the tying hand; I then compress the wing down further, and then repeat the exchange of hands once more. I will work back and forth from one hand to the other three or four times until I feel I have the wing compressed to a comfortable dimension.

"Once the wing is compressed and being held in position with the serving hand, it is a simple matter of winding a few loose wraps of thread around the compressed tie in point and draw the loops tight with an upward pull. Without releasing the wing from the serving hand's grasp, I twist the butts up on top of the hook shank, if needed, and then give a few more turns of thread to the tie in point securing it to the hook. I then release the serving hand's grip.

"If the wing looks okay, then I re-grasp it with the serving hand, and while holding it thus, I snip away the excess butt materials, and wind a few more turns of thread through the fiber ends."[28]

Hunter's description of alternating hands in order to provide compression to the wings sounds to me somewhat tedious and for the novice, perhaps, may result in misalignment of the wing tips due to possible movement of the wing halves either forward or rearward during the process. Nevertheless, as in all things, practice could make this a very satisfactory technique.

Al Cohen of Dallas, Texas, has offered several thoughts. In order to make the wing tie in area flat Al applies cement to the area after he ties in the throat hackle. After an hour or so, he takes pliers and flattens the tie in area and then attaches black monocord to tie in the wings. He comments that the first two attempts at setting the wings usually are unsuccessful but by the third attempt the fibers of the wing at the tie in area should be crushed and softened so that they may be compressed with minimal resistance.

An additional highly relevant point he makes is that the step-down from the end of the body/throat to the hook shank, at the wing tie in point, should be minimal so that when the wing is attached up against the body/throat, there is less tendency for the wing to cock upward from the parallel. Another consideration for avoiding collapsing and buckling of the outer wing is the nature of the underwing and how the outerwing touches it. Cohen, however, does not comment further on how this may influence the outerwing, but I believe the implication is obvious.

In Volume I, Number 4, Fall 1989 of "The Group" and Volume II, Number 1, Winter 1990 of "The Salmon Flyer", Wayne Luallen presented a two part article entitled "A Method for Mounting a Wing on a Salmon Fly". Since this article is of fairly recent vintage and available to most of our members, I will only briefly touch on some pertinent points. From the article and from personal communication with Luallen one of the more important aspects to consider is holding the wing with the thumb and middle finger of the left hand in order to maintain a parallel relationship between the fingers, wing, and hook shank. According to Luallen, this will help prevent the tendency for the wing to cock upward when tying in. He also recommends that, in addition to pinching the two wing halves together, the hook shank be incorporated in the pinch with uniform pressure on the wing from top to bottom.

He believes mounting the wing completely on top of the hook shank will yield a flat or two-dimensional wing. If the lower fibers of the wings are tied against the upper third of the hook shank, the wing will have a more three dimensional quality and present a sense of depth. In order to facilitate compression of the wing fibers, Luallen will apply either water (sparingly) or saliva at the tie in point after the wing position relative to the body is established. Once the wing is positioned, he reverses the wing wraps and applies the saliva/water to the cut-off wing butts then re-wraps the butts. This seems to soften the fibers so that they will compress more completely. He points out that he does not use head cement in mounting the wing because this results in hard spots which do not compress well, especially during subsequent steps, particularly if applying shoulders, cheeks, roof and toppings.

In Volume I, number 3, Summer 1989 of "The Group", Luallen introduced a video tape in which he, with the assistance of Larry Goates and Scott Stisser, tied a Baron. The following comments relating to wing mounting are noted.

First, Luallen is very emphatic in stating that after making the three soft wraps of thread around the wing, the slips are held very tightly between the thumb and middle finger. This is in contradistinction to other tyers' recommendations who have suggested perhaps a light grasping of the wing slips. Second, he is clear that the butts of the underwing should remain uncut so that they can provide a slightly broader platform for mounting the main wing. Thirdly, on the tape he makes one soft loop and a preliminary compression during the mounting of the wing. He then makes three soft loops, each with upward pressure to the limit of the thread in order to compress in stages. Each successive wrap will allow greater compression.

In summary, a variation of the soft loop technique seems to be the most popular and effective one for mounting both the underwing and the main wing on a salmon fly. Further, firmly pinching the wing halves and the hook shank seems to assure more accurate placement with fewer chances for misalignment. As all authors and experienced tyers have noted, practice will enable the tyer to achieve a high degree of proficiency with a great level of satisfaction. And as Hale wrote in 1892, "So far, every process described is mere child's play compared to it and nothing but continual practice will make the beginner really efficient."[29]

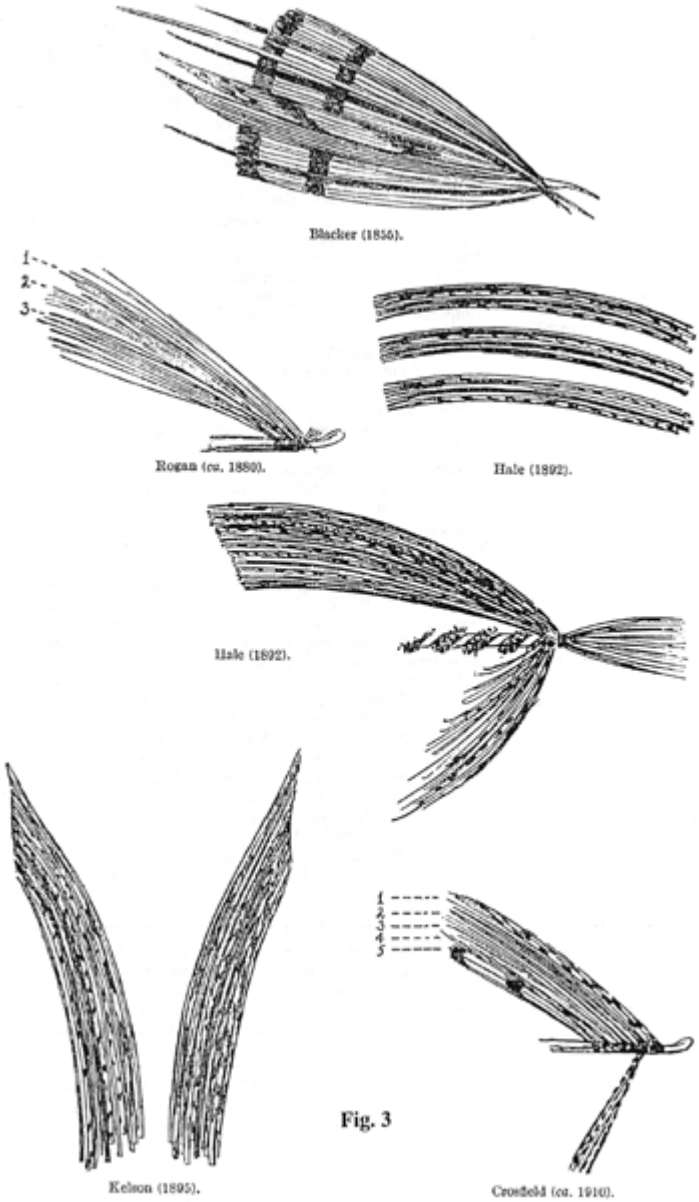


Fig. 3

1) The transition from the body/throat to bare hook shank at the wing tie-in point should be tapered. If not, the "step-down" should be as small as possible.

2) Do not cut off underwing butt fibers until the main wing is attached. Allow these butts to serve as a platform onto which the main wing is secured.

3) When mounting the wing, grasp both wing halves and hook shank/body between the thumb and middle finger and do not remove grip until the wing is securely mounted.

4) Utilizing a soft loop technique, make three soft loops pulling each tighter. Unwrap and reposition here if necessary.

5) Use saliva or water (sparingly) at the tie in point. This will soften the fibers which will enable the thread. to crush them more completely as they collapse onto the hook shank.

6) Lift the butts and make two wraps under them onto the bare hook shank to act as a "lock" for wing wraps.

7) If the wing does not sit properly to your liking, do not hesitate to remove, steam, remarry, steam, and remount before cutting off the butts.

8) Utilize the wing butts as levers to forcibly "right" the wings on the hook shank before cutting off the butts, a few fibers at a time.

9) Remember, if the underwing is askew, the main wing may be similarly affected.

10) PRACTICE, PRACTICE, PRACTICE, PRACTICE...

I would like to thank Wayne Luallen, Bill Hunter, Al Cohen, Mike Radencich, Dave Paris and Tom Juracek for their advice, assistance and encouragement in the preparation of this article.

HOOK MODIFICATION

Charles Judy

I have become involved in trying to make classic blind eye hooks from readily available eyed hooks. I wanted to do more than just straighten the eye - I wanted to duplicate the styles of the past. I didn't want to have much invested in my raw materials so I decided to use Mustad 36890 hooks of which I paid eight dollars for a hundred in size 4/0. I didn't have to concern myself with the cost of wasted hooks as I experimented.

REMOVING THE EYE

Use an alcohol lamp to straighten the eye. The lamp has a much smaller flame than a propane torch and provides enough of the necessary heat to do the job. Heat the eye until it glows red and bend it a little. Heat to red again: and bend a little more. It is easy to break the during this step unless you take it slowly. I've found that just gripping a Mustad 36890 2/0 with pliers can cool it enough to cause it to break when it is bent unless I am very careful. The smaller the wire, the more care is needed.

When straightened it will look something like this from the top:

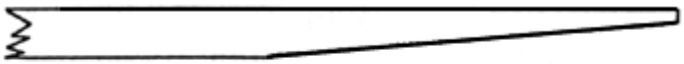


Fig. 1

You will find that there will be small curves in it as well During manufacturing, one side of the hook is kept flat and some material on the other side is removed when the eye is formed. This makes it rather difficult to grind the eye area to a taper for our blind eye. Use a very small (1/4 pound) machinist's hammer and a piece of polished steel for an anvil to hammer out the curves and modify the eye area so that it is more like this:

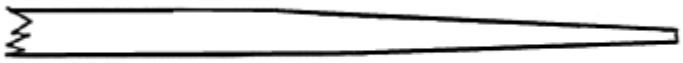


Fig. 2

Wait until the hook has been bent to shape before grinding the eye taper.

ANNEALING

Annealing the hook softens it and allows it to be reshaped without as much danger of breaking. Use a propane torch for this step. Holding the hook by the eye tip of the shank with an old pair of pliers, heat the hook quickly to red or just above the "critical temperature" and allow it to cool slowly (while still holding it by the eye). Structural changes take place in the piece of steel at the critical temperature and the manner in which it is cooled will determine whether it will be soft or brittle.

There is a simple check to determine hen the critical temperature has been reached or high carbon steel hooks such as these. As the hook is heated, remove it from the flame and quickly check the heated part of the hook with a small magnet. If that part is no longer magnetic, the hook has been heated above the critical temperature and no additional heating is necessary. Prolonged heating at this temperature or heating significantly above it may result in poorer quality steel.

By using an attachment for the torch that producers a wide, flat flame, the entire hook can be heated uniformly, minimizing the time it is in the flame. The hook will now be relatively soft and can be formed without breaking

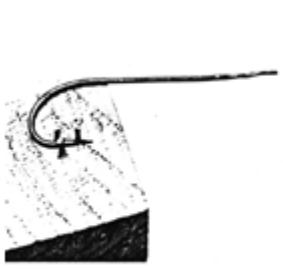


Fig. 3

Fig. 4

Fig. 5

Fig. 6

Fig. 7

Fig. 8

The next step is bending the hook to shape. I have collected as many pictures of traditional hooks as possible to use as guides in shaping. Making a bending form from wood of the desired hook shape did not work well so I made several simple bending jigs and bent the hooks freehand. The jig in Fig. 3 is used to bend the point to the shape shown in Fig. 4. To shape the point, just grasp the hook wire directly behind the barb with a pair of needle nose pliers and bend. Reshape the barb as desired with the pliers.

To obtain the desired overall hook shape lay it over a picture of the hook you are trying to duplicate and see how it needs to be bent, then place it between the bolts of the jig shown in Fig. 5 and bend slightly. Compare the hook with the picture and bend again. It will take a number of iterations of this bending operation but any number of traditional hook shapes can thus be obtained. With some practice a hook can be shaped in just a few minutes.

The jig shown in Fig. 3 was made by laying a hook on the end grain of a piece of oak and driving three steel brads in as shown. The jig in Fig. 5 was made using two 3/8 inch bolts about 3 inches long with about 1 inch of the length threaded into the end grain of a piece of hardwood about 20 inches wide and 4 inches long. Drill two holes 1/64 inch undersize for the bolts spaced so that there is just enough room for the hook wire to pass between the unthreaded portion of the bolts. My bolts are about 1/16 inch apart and this seems to work fine for hook sizes 2/0 through 4/0. I have made another jig using smaller bolts with closer spacing for finer wired hooks.

GRINDING THE EYE

The operations that are likely to break the hook are now complete and you are ready to shape the hook shank for the blind eye.

Clamp the hook in a small hand-held vise with jaws that have been lined with leather and grind the hook using a Foredom variable speed tool. The first pass is along the top of the shank removing just the irregularities to give a straight and even surface. Then grind a taper on the bottom and sides. After the taper has been formed, switch to small files and remove the ridges to give a rounded and smooth taper to the shank. The tapering could be done with files only but the Foredom tool speeds up the process.

HARDENING AND TEMPERING

The hook can now be hardened by heating it to the critical temperature and rapidly cooling it. Then it is tempered by heating to a temperature below the critical temperature. The hardened hook will be quite brittle and lack toughness. Tempering will remove the strains in the hook and give a balance between

hardness and roughness. The temperature for tempering and the time at that temperature will determine the balance in the finished hook.

To harden the hook, grasp the tip of the eye with pliers and heat it while carefully checking with a magnet for the proper temperature. Do this heating in a semi-darkened room so you can see that the hook is of a uniform color, meaning a uniform temperature. The hook will now be brittle and easily broken.

Temper the hook in a kitchen oven at 410 degrees F. for one hour. Put the hook on a piece of aluminum about 10" by 6" by 1/4" that has been heated for 30 minutes to let it stabilize at that temperature. After heating for the hour, remove the hook and dump it off the aluminum and allow it to cool. Do not leave it on the aluminum during cooling. It is not necessary to quench it in water at this time but you may do so if desired. It doesn't matter how the hook is cooled after tempering by this heating method.

CLEANING

The hook will now be covered with a light scale and will need to be cleaned. I use phosphoric acid, available from paint stores as "Concrete Etch and Cleaner". Put some of the acid in a small jar with the hook and place the jar, uncovered, in a pan of water that has been heated to 150 degrees F. Be careful to keep the jar upright. In about 30 minutes the hook will be free of the grey scale and should then be washed and dried. The hook should now appear a dull, dark grey to black and it will be lightly pitted.

FINISHING

This is the process that has proven to be the most difficult. I have tried unsuccessfully to achieve a finish that is as hard as the original using various paints either brushed or sprayed on. I have temporarily settled on an auto touch-up spray paint called DUPLI-COLOR. I use their black primer, DS 98 and black paint, DS 100. One of the reasons that I like this paint is because the amount that is released when spraying is small and I feel that I have better control on coat thickness. The detail of the point and barb can be lost with a little excess paint. Support the hook vertically by the tip of the shank and spray on a coat of primer. Allow this to dry and then spray a light coat of paint which should be allowed to dry at least a day. There will most likely be irregularities in the surface that can be removed by a light rubbing with 00000 steel wool. Spray again and allow to dry for two more days. Go over the hook for a final time with the steel wool. Be careful, a little excess pressure by the steel wool will cut through the fairly thin finish thus requiring another coat. The hook will now have a flat black finish and will probably have bits of steel wool clinging to it. Baking the finished hook will aid in hardening the paint. Heat the oven to 200 degrees F. and put in means of supporting the hooks. I have small holes drilled part way into the plate of aluminum that I use for tempering allowing the hook to be placed vertically. Next wash the hook under tap water to remove the bits of steel wool and, without bothering to dry it, put it in a hole in the plate. Bake it for 30 minutes. This will produce a nice, glossy black finish.

FINAL COMMENTS

There are a number of hooks that are good prospects for modification such as a Mustad 94720. The Hook Book by Dick Stewart is practically a necessity for choosing candidates. The Partridge CS-15 provides a lot of steel but I haven't been satisfied with the point and barb and haven't yet figured out how to cut a new barb.

All of the tools required to do the modifications cost less that $50, thus making this an inexpensive way to produce good, classic salmon fly hooks.

Many tiers using custom hooks place a small piece of card stock in the vise to protect the hook finish from marring. In addition, I use a small rectangular piece of sheet mylar inside the card stock because I have noticed that some finishes can be dulled by direct contact with card under pressure.

I would like to hear from anyone who has questions about this article or suggestions that might be of help.

THE SALMON FLIES OF BRITTANY

Michel Fontan

As a salmon fly tyer and a native of France it was only a question of time before I turned my eyes back toward my country in a quest for its salmon fly tying and fishing traditions. I knew that salmon were abundant in many French rivers in the past but, alas, such is no longer true. Sadly, French salmon rivers have suffered the same fate as American rivers with regards to loss of salmon habitat. Yet, many people and associations are trying to bring salmon back to its once native waters. The amount of salmon taken by local fishermen with rod and fly once numbered in the thousands... now they number only in the hundreds.

With this knowledge it was a mix of great joy and concern for the future of Brittany's salmon that I was able to observe for the first time in my life a pair of salmon spawning just a few meters from me this past December in the Scorff, a river that my host Yannn Youen Bouglouan knows quite well.

The tradition of the salmon fly in Brittany is quite different that the English. First, people who fish in Brittany are mainly millers, farmers, laborers of all kinds or "professional fishermen", i.e., those who sell their daily catch of trout and salmon to local restaurants as a way of making a living. Their rods are usually made of two or three pieces of wood taken from local Ash trees.

These are two-handed rods generally 14 feet in length. Since there does not exist in Brittany a profusion and richness of exotic materials for fly tying (as there is in England), local tyers must use local sources for their materials.

The following is an English viewpoint by John Kemp from his book Shooting and Fishing in Lower Brittany, written in 1859: "I looked at their queer flies (a bundle of worsted and no wings) and their stiff poles in the place of rods, and wondered how with such tackle they could catch ten or fifteen salmon each per season... He showed my a fly of divers colours and curious manufacture, but did not make believe that he was going to fish with it" he continues: "With respect to salmon flies, I had better recommend to purchase from one of the native anglers. They themselves are very fond of using the Blue Cock's feather for wing which is very efficacious in the clear water..."

Another point of view from Romilly Fedden's Golden Days (1919) and mentioned by Veron S. Hidy in The Pleasure of Fly Fishing"

"The local pattern of salmon flies will doubtless come as somewhat of a shock to the visitor when first he arrives in Brittany. They are indeed gaunt and clumsy looking creatures, in effect, destitute of what we understand as "wings". Only experience can teach that they are here more successful than our customary full winged patterns."

The flies of Brittany generally are unnamed and are simply known by their originators. A lot of them were developed right at water's edge using very simple materials.

The foremost tyer on the Scorff and Elle rivers was a professional fisherman named Francois LeNy. Born in 1905 near the Faouret, he died in Quimperle in 1963 after leading a life dedicated to the persuit of salmon and trout. He was taught by his uncle to fly fish for salmon and used no other technique.

His flies follow a pretty straightforward pattern:

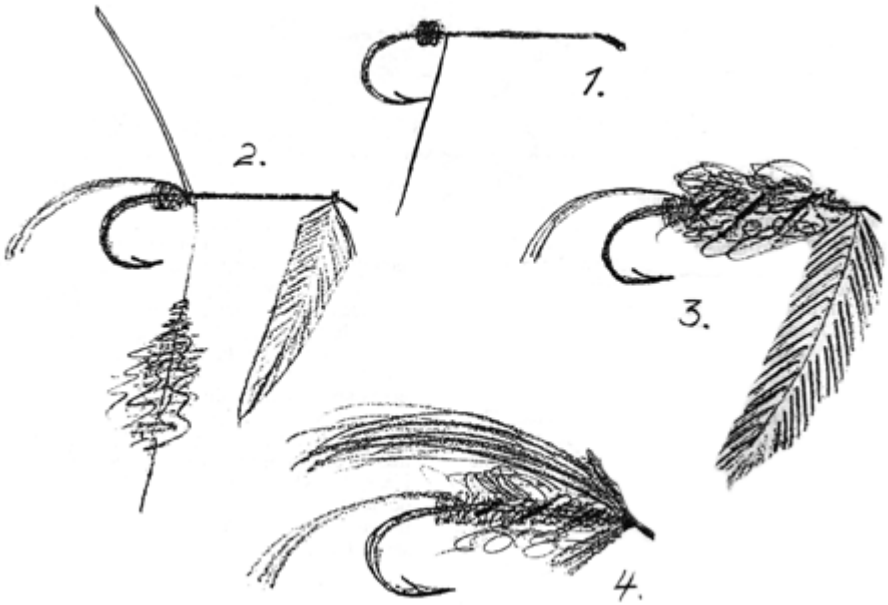
Hook: Down-eyed regular or offset bend, bronzed, and in sizes 2 to 8, including the odd sizes and rarely larger (although I have seen a size 3/0 tied by LeNy).
Thread: Black or grey silk (but mainly black).
Tag: red, yellow, orange or green wool or embroidery cotton in divers shades. Also popular are red claret - "Bordeaux" and a brighter red for Spring salmon.
Tail: Golden pheasant topping, sometimes a hackle point.
Body: Boar underfur, natural colors or dyed with picric acid or onion skin.
Ribs: Tinsel often cut out of a piece of silver or gold paper.
Hackle: Blue cock tied either as a body hackle or collar.
Wing: A mixture of hen peacock's secondary tail feather and golden pheasant tail fibers,sometimes with the addition of a few red fibers of golden pheasant body feather.

The tying sequence is as follows:

1. The wool is tied for the tag, quite heavy after the bend of the hook.
2. The topping is then attached, pointing downward over part of the tag.
3. The hackle, if used as a collar, is then tied at the eye of the hook.
4. The rib and hackle (if using a body hackle) are attached to the hook just after the tail.
5. The main wing of Pheasant, sided with equally long fibers of peacock is then attached and secured over the body.
6. The collar is wound and the head formed and varnished.

Note: Until the 1970's local fly- makers hand-held their flies while tying them and today a lot of tyers are still tying without a vise.

The fly tying and fishing of Brittany is not lost nor forgotten and people are fighting to restore its rivers, maintain these traditions and teach their children to carry them on. My sincere thanks to all of them and particularly to Yann Youen for devoting their love and time to carry on these traditions.



COMMENTARY

John Betts

The cover on our most recent issue; beyond its normal excellence in both concept and execution, may serve a purpose other than that which is most immediate and obvious. Unless noted otherwise the assumption could be made that the background was some variety of material available in sheet form for use on flies like the one shown. Judith Dunham's two books were the first major works in my experience to display flies against non-traditional backgrounds - e.g. Hans deGroot's work on top of a glass of Scottish whiskey and again over empty bottles.

Relaxing the grip of traditional backgrounds made up of blue, some other color or something Sylvan, has allowed this viewer to regard flies from another perspective. Each quarter The Salmon Flyer originates from a non-traditional source and provides a different point from which to view the subject.

I did not enter the last challenge, (last year's Michel's Challenge - Ed.) quite sure that my proficiency is easily the clumsiest to be found in the entire membership of one hundred and eleven. Compounding my technical deficiency is, what is in all likelihood, the worst of any stock of tying materials. By the next issue some of that - the entering part - will change.

A fascinating aspect of the first challenge was the variety of technique to be found in the submissions. All the tyers had the same instructions, same deadline, worked independently and started with a hook. The differences would have been apparent to the most naive of the uninitiated. This is one of the advantages of a blind challenge not found in "competitions" (the latter are the most deplorable of reasons to do one's best. Who would have won and by what criteria?).

Had all but one of those flies been destroyed before they were seen and all being the first examples of that dressing, the survivor would have been declared "definitive". The same could have been said had fortune smiled and not frowned on any one of the others. Given the lack of similarity and equal chances of any one surviving, what do we use to determine "definitive" and therefore the direction of orthodoxy? Orthodoxy in this case would be determined by chance or default and that is not sufficient. Are the standard fly fishing/tying publications the way to be travelled and the path we should take, or are they instead just other avenues of approach? If this is so, then our publication is as valid as theirs. Did they freely choose their way or did they go there because of a lack of conviction. "Fly Fisherman" was unique and original as the "Fly Tyer". The joiner has only recently emerged from the doldrums with a new art director. The old "Fly 'Tyer" has changed for the better - foundering being the only alternative - and became a lively, energetic youngster. It has also traded its unique (and now lethal) format for one that bears a greater resemblance to the rest of the family. To survive as something that management wanted to get bigger, larger revenues were essential. I don't see that getting bigger has ever been part of The Salmon Flyer's reason for existing. Increasing the overhead and therefore the break-even point just isn't necessary for our continued existence.

Though a very minor player in an industry that grows larger by the hour, I often hear about someone "stealing" someone else's ideas, livelihood and immortality. Granted it does happen but a lot less than one would imagine. Even though the ingredients may be the same, the mark of an individual on his or her work cannot be duplicated by others - e.g. the last "challenge" and our magazine. Individuality is diluted when one begins to assume some of the trappings of tradition for no clear reason beyond cashing in on it, and even then the job will only be approximate.

The Salmon Flyer is far and away my favorite publication. If it reaches the end of its natural life in October, I shall be grateful for all that has been given me and I will sorely miss its future. I type poorly and do not possess a computer. I am, however, a good folder. If someone can provide the pieces I'll be glad to do the pasting, folding, stapling and sending. This I'll do as long as the circulation doesn't go much over 200 and the size remains the same or nearly so. From there on I'll need help.

Our publication stands before a background of what others do. No one runs it in the sense that there is a management team. No one is bustling about "upping revenues" and possibly taking on work that might otherwise be of no interest. What we don't need on our inside cover is a four color masterpiece of the latest graphite to the Nth Super Belchfire Masterpiece that comes in 12 interchangeable sections for all known line weights - and some not yet thought of. We do what we do with very little money and have a surplus of that.

I belong to a small tying group - The Cotinga Club - here in Denver. We meet about once a month and it's something I look forward to a great deal - so much so that I show up for meetings that haven't been scheduled. This is one place in my life where the strictures of conventional wisdom and administration don't exist. Again, no one runs it, it just sort of runs itself. As I've said I'm a terrible tyer with poor resources. For me the value is in being able to belong and tie with people who are really good and a pleasure to be with.

My vote for The Salmon Flyer is for it to stay as it is. People who are interested in Salmon fly tying will find their way to us, and do so at a rate we can absorb without risking what is unique to us. I can get regular magazines without any trouble. For The Salmon Flyer I'm going to have to be willing to go to extra trouble to get it as it is.

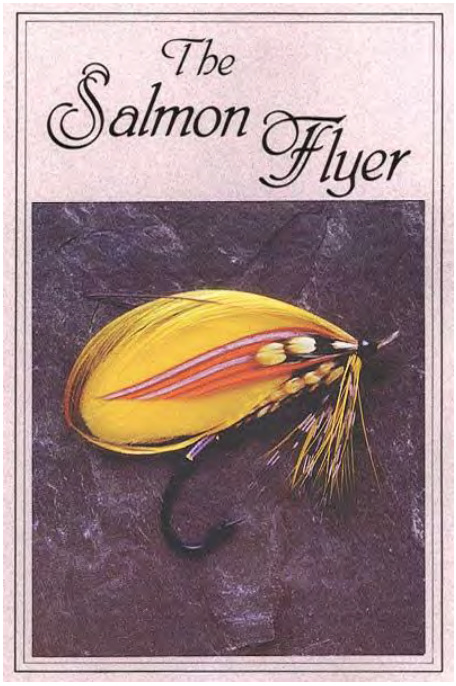
I belonged the the Fly Dressers Guild and United Fly Tyers. Why do we need to be affiliated with anyone? Would that be preferable? For me, preferable is not always being like or with anyone else.

For nearly ten years I have been going to Fly Fair in Holland. This really is a tent show. In 1986 I was the only American there and the only one tying. The wind blew so hard that the tent had to be restaked with a truck. In 1992 there were 40 tyers. This year there will be something like 60. There was a suggestion, by an American, that it be moved from a pasture by the river to someplace "important" where it would be visited by 10,000 people in 3 days rather than 2000 in two days. Happily the idea disappeared during a very sudden silence. it now has an opening dinner for about 200. In 1986 there was none. At the end of that event twelve of us were seated around a table in a very old room. The room was full of windows and streams of wonderful evening light. No wonder Vermeer painted the way he did. The tent is now erected by professionals who know how to do it.

Lots of big names are invited today and it's definitely a production that is very fashionable to be invited to. Much of the charm of the crazy crooked floor and flapping tent walls is gone. The people who run it and first befriended me are still there. What four people in a car started now has regular meetings.

Good ideas grow because they are good. In that process they will probably loose some of their charm and innocence. Both are rare in the best of circumstances. Making The Salmon Flyer a conventional production would slowly drain its charm and savage the innocence of people who made it successful. Let's just keep it as it is for as long as we can and let the "big boys" of the magazine world let us be.

The Salmon Flyer
Vol. 6 - No. 3, Summer, 1994



BOOK REVIEWS

Pierre Pepin

This column is proposed as a book assessment forum about existing literature concerning classic Atlantic salmon flies: i.e., a sort of buyer's guide for the novice and professional fly dresser. As a forum, this column is meant to be passed on from one contributor to another and it should be utilized in any way to suit one's interests, while deploying all efforts to remain as objective as possible (this I found to be almost impossible!). Its survival will depend solely upon your future participation as a critic.

Therefore, as the opening contributor, I have an easy task in choosing not one but two books to review which will most probably, though not exclusively, interest the novice fly dresser and Classic salmon fly lover.

These books can be considered as being very useful as entry level literature because of their availability and of their decent price. Also, they both provide numerous Classic salmon fly descriptions, quality photographs and historical information about the flies and their originators.

These books contain very little explicit dressing instructions. As such I would not recommend them as your first and foremost investment when initially starting a Classic fly library. Those who are seeking tying instructions for a smooth transition from tying hairwing salmon flies to tying the fully-dressed flies will have to look elsewhere. Yet, the two books presented here are serious complements to a budgeted library because from them one can adequately sample 19th and 20th century authors on the subject. As you will see, the authors of these two books have presented the history of Classic salmon flies quite differently.

Frodin, Mikael, Classic Salmon Flies: History and Patterns, South Hackensack, New Jersey, Stoeger Publishing Co., 1992, 200 pages.
Soft cover. ISBN 0-88317-163-5
Suggested retail price: $19.95

This book is a catalogue of 165 known Classic salmon fly patterns photographed in color and presented in alphabetical order. Each pattern is listed as per their originator's dressing (Kelson, Francis, Blacker, Pryce-Tannatt, etc.). The easy-to-consult format of the book makes it a no-nonsense tool and quick reference: one pattern per page with the fly illustrated as a close-up color photograph along with the originator's credentials and historical background.

It is possible that some purists and rare book collectors may shun this type of book because it does not quite have the same distinction, character and charm of the older books. However, for the apprentice dresser, it provides an opportunity to catch a glimpse of these Classic flies and to access information often found only in the rarer books. This is reinforced by the fact that Frodin claims several patterns included in the book have never before been illustrated.

In my opinion the high point of the book is reached when Frodin details all the "official" variations of a particular pattern whenever there is a lack of universal agreement amongst the old British masters about the original and "true" ingredients of that pattern. Some advanced Classic fly dressers will probably want to have a look at the photos of the flies (all of which were tied by Frodin) in order to appreciate his personal dressing style and to sample the merits of a Scandinavian artist. However, the quality of certain pictures (a small portion of the lot) may be disappointing to discerning readers because there seems to be insufficient lighting coming from the observer's point of view which, in some cases, dims and dulls the plumage's brilliance which in turn does not pay proper justice to the tyer's work.

Nevertheless, I think this book will be a worthwhile investment for use at the tying bench.

Bates, Joseph D. Jr., The Art of the Atlantic Salmon Fly. Boston, Mass., David R. Godine Publishers, Inc., 1987. 232 pages.
Hard cover. ISBN 0-87923-674-4.
Suggested retail price: $65.00.

The late Joseph D. Bates Jr. was indisputably a modern angling authority. Just mention his name on almost any North American salmon river and you will find people able to quote word for word from his books. These words are gospel to some fly fishers and, as such, are to be abided by. The same could only be said of one or maybe two other authors.

Unfortunately, this, his last book, does not seem to have been met with the same enthusiasm and circulation from either the angling crowd or the fly tying community, at least that is what I have witnessed locally. A possible explanation is that the book does not have the same mass appeal in the sense that its topic may be too specific and specialized for the practical and utilitarian interests of the majority of his previous following.

Yet, this book still has a place in a Classic fly dresser's library. This compilation of the salmon fly's history puts the fly patterns, the fly styles and their originators in the proper perspective of time and place in relation to each other. This allows the novice to sort out who's who and to evaluate, to a certain extent, the Masters' artistic contributions.

For some connoiseurs and collectors, this summerizing of the past may seem a trivial exercise, but for the novice, whose enthusiasm is not always equalled by the size of his or her investment portfolio, it supplies him or her with the "big picture" and a better understanding of the fly's history. In a way, you could call this book a "substitute" to the real thing.

The Art of the Atlantic Salmon Fly is presented in the traditional fashion and format of the British Masters. It contains over 75 patterns with the original ingredient listings and 23 color photo plates illustrating over 300 flies. Worthy of mention is the fact that the author suggests and lists decent substitutes for hard-to-find materials and ingredients. The book takes us through time from the early beginnings of salmon fly tying to the second half of the 20th century. He writes of the slow decline of the fully dressed flies, the rise of the hairwings and he seems to end on a note of encouragement in describing the resurgence of the fully-dressed flies.

At one point in the book, Colonel Bates debates the concepts of "art form" and "fine art" to describe Classic fly dressing. He uses the following lexicon in describing the "state of the art" in Classic dressing:

- Main schools of thought, traditionalists
- Trends, creative movements and influences
- Novices, masters, talents, genius, authorities
- Controversy, criticism
- Artists, collectors and museums.

This "vocabulary" is definitely associated with today's fine art scene!

In my opinion, Colonel Bates' tribute to the Classics in the form of this book is a consecration of Classic fly dressing as a fine art. If you prefer a moderate phrasing, this book provides a relevant testimony depicting Classic fly dressing's historical background and heritage along with the necessary data and credentials to allow Classic salmon fly dressers to contend for and claim as their own the title of Artist.

So, who will be the next "critic"? How about telling us novice and veteran fly dressers which should be the first and foremost book to acquire in order to make the transition from hairwing salmon flies to the fully dressed Classics. I would also be interested in comments or rebuttals to this column.

Rouge et Noir

JOURNEY THROUGH A FLY

Tom Juracek

I thought it might be interesting to examine a fly closely along with the tying steps I took to produce it. The fly demonstrated is the "Rouge et Noir" (French for red and black, also the name of a gambling card game).

Let's start off with the pattern description:

Rouge et Noir (Traherne)

Tag: Silver twist and topping-colored silk.
Tail: A topping.
Butt: Black ostrich herl.
Body: in five sections, the first and third of red silk veiled above and below with a pair of Indian Crow back to back and butted with black herl. The second and fourth sections of blue silk veiled above and below with a pair of Jungle Cock back to back and butted with black herl. The fifth section of claret silk.
Ribs: Fine oval silver tinsel.
Throat: A pair of Jungle Cock back to back above and below as before but tied in right over the last

pairs of Indian Crow so as to partially cover them. The crow should be slightly longer than the Jungle cook
Wings: Toppings. Horns: Blue and gold macaw.
Head: Black herl.

I selected a rather long-shanked hook in order to accommodate the numerous body veilings and allow each to stand distinctly on it's own. I could have selected a shorter shank and the veilings would have crowded or overlapped each other. This style is not necessarily bad, but I prefer the cleaner look of separated veilings.

The gut eye was attached to the front of the hook. I selected and formed a piece of gut that would make a smaller eye. Anticipating a small head because of the sparseness of materials in the wing, I did not want a large eye offsetting the small head. The gut was attached to the sides of the shank, rather than underneath to provide a large, flat surface to work with at the head. Attaching gut to the sides also allows me to control the thickness of the front portion of the body easier. The ends of the gut were well flattened and thread was used to ensure a smooth transition from hook shank to gut. The gut terminates just short of the rearward tinsel wrap in the claret section. Can you tell?

The thread was attached at the rear of the hook and the tag tied in a normal manner. The next decision was what to do with the tail. I have found that topping wing flies generally require a tail that is longer than a married wing fly. In this particular fly, the body veilings ae going to require the wing to stand rather high. If I use a short tail I am going to have difficulty forming the toppings high enough in the wing in order to allow them to clear the body cleanly. I selected a tail that was 2x the gap of the hook. This was mounted directly atop the hook shank. Upon reflection, the tail is of the proper length, but could have been a little higher and not quite so straight out of the rear butt. This would have helped to elevate the wing a little more.

The rear butt is a tough one. I have but one material tied down when I am prepared to wind the ostrich herl. I believe it is important that all of the butts and the head resemble each other as closely a possible. All the other butts will require at least 6 materials before tying in the ostrich. Yet this butt has but two materials tied off before tying it in. So, how many turns of herl are required on all the other butts? This will determine how many I should make on this butt, whether they are required or not.

Before giving you the answer, let's stop a moment and look at my selection of herl. I selected a piece from the middle of the feather that I felt had relatively small barbs. I wanted my butts to be nice and tight. Because the rear, butt is generally a cleaner wrap with the herl, I decided to make 5 turns. I anticipated that I may not get 5 turns on the other butts, but I should get 4 and should be able to make them all even. I am generally unable to get the turns of ostrich herl on mid-body butts as close together as I can on the rear butt, thus the extra turn at the rear.

I decided to make all of the body sections of equal size. Because they are going to be small with 5 sections anyway, I feel that making any smaller than 1/5 of the remaining hook shank will be too small. So I try and divide the area from in front of the rear butt to the rear of the lacquered portion of the head equally. Thus, each body section is made of a floss portion and an ostrich herl butt.

In tying the floss section of the body I do the following: I advance the thread to the start of the forward butt. I remove 5 turns of thread and clip the tinsel ribbing. I then wind back on 3 turns of thread. This completely cover the butt of the tinsel ribbing, but does not allow it to extend into the ostrich herl butt area. I tie in the floss with two wraps of thread. At this time my thread has returned to the rear of the forward butt, but I have not used any of the butt area for tying so far. The floss is wrapped back to the rear butt and then forward again. The two turns of thread that tied in the floss were not covered on the way to the rear butt, but are now covered when wrapping forward. This gives the slightest taper to the front of the body section that if all works out well will not be visible in the finished fly. The tinsel is then wrapped over the floss. I elected to bring it up and tie off on the near side for two reasons. First, without that brief glimpse of tinsel the forward section of the body looked bare between the second turn of tinsel and the butt. Second, I did not want the tinsel tied off on the underside of the shank because that would make it difficult to seat the veiling feathers properly. I thought three turns of tinsel per body section were too many, which is why I chose two.

In placing the veiling feathers on the hook shank I tied the underside feathers on first. The tie off of the floss was accomplished with 2 turns of thread. One of these was removed and two more added to tie off the tinsel. The thread was advanced rearward to tie on the bottom veilings with two turns. A final

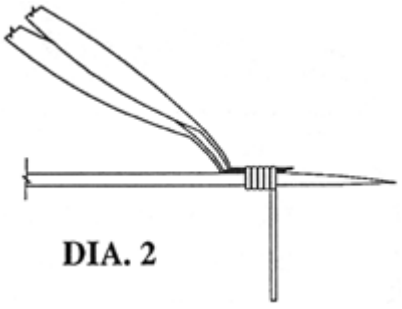
rearward turn was made to secure the top veiling feathers and then one additional turn forward was made. By the way, I only slightly bent the stems of the crow feathers and did not impart any bend to the jungle feathers in order to get them to stand away from the shank. As you recall I had left a minor taper to the floss when I wrapped it. This minor taper was sufficient to make the feathers sit up in proper position. This second turn was removed to tie in the ostrich herl, and then the thread was advanced forward three turns. The thread turns were made as neat a possible so that a smooth surface was rendered for the ostrich herl to be wound upon. As previously stated, 4 turns of herl then comprised the butt.

This technique was repeated for each body section until the underside of the throat was tied in. When it was time to tie in the top section of the throat it was time for a command decision. So far I had been trying to make each veiling slightly longer than the previous one and had been attempting to maintain a consistent angle to each set of veilings. You can crituque the fly and decide whether I was successful in so ding and whether the top to the fly mirrors the bottom.

Where were we? Ah, the bottom throat had been tied in and thetop of the hook was bare at the head position. Now how to eliminate that most vexing problem that Mr. Nolte would refer to as the forward creeping head syndrome (FCHS). FCHS is a problem wherein the rear of the top of the head starts significantly forward of the point where the rear of the bottom of the head is located. While this can be a problem on married wing flies, it is particularly a problem on topping wing flies. This because the thickness of each topping stem forces the thread forward as each topping is stacked atop the previous one. If 5 or 6 toppings are to be stacked, the thread is going to end up tying the final one in at a point that is in front of where the first one was tied in by the thickness of the stem of the intervening toppings. Two significant steps were taken to eliminate the FCHS.

DIA. 1

Diagram one shows how I flattened the toppings prior to tying in. Note that I did not just flatten the portion to be tied down, but also flattened a portion of the stem that flows away from the hook shank. This eliminated part of th thickness of the stem that caused FCHS. However, there was still some width to the stems and FCHS would still come into play without diagram 2.



DIA. 2

As the first topping was tied in (and I tied the first two in together), I purposely did not tie them in at the point where the quill was bent. Rather, I tied them in with the bend in the quill somewhat behind the tie in point. The quill that was to be tied down for the first topping extends from the front of the head all the way back past the tie in point to a position slightly over the body. Each subsequent topping is tied in with the waste end slightly shorter in order to allow a tapered head, as shown, but with enough width that a herl head can be formed.

Three toppings were tied in. At this point the upper veilings were added. I did this so that I could again maintain a consistent angle to each body veiling. Had I tied in the upper veilings prior to tying in a topping, the downward pressure exerted by the toppings would have forced the upper throat veilings to

lay much lower to the hook shank. As it is, they are slightly pressured, but not nearly as much as they might have been. Having tied those veilings on, the remaining two toppings were added one at a time.

Horns were formed and tied in with the distinct idea of having them conform to the upper line of the toppings as closely as possible. You may or may not like this look, but it was what I was after when I tied this fly.

Finally, we come to the herl head. I wanted the head to approximate the other butts as closely as possible. However, I have tied down a significantly greater amount of material at the head position than I did at any other butt location and the diameter of the head is much larger than the hook shank was under any of the butts. I need to maintain a consistent size and shape. How will I do it?

I selected a piece of herl from he tip of a the ostrich feather, rather the from a location next to where I have been working(which as you will recall was somewhere near the middle of the feather). As a result the barbules on this piece of herl are much shorter than those on the pieces I have previously been working with. The shorter barbule length combined with the larger diameter base will allow the head to be no larger from top to bottom than any of the butts along the body. Now if I am successful, I will also be able to make just 4 turns of herl at the head and keep the look consistent with the other butts. I wound the butt from the rear of the head forward and then tied off the on the bottom of the shank. I wasn't real thrilled with the taper to the thread portion of the head on the upper part of the fly, but other than that, all seemed to turn out well. Realistically, the thread portion of the head ended up being larger than it needed to be. Some rather thick head cement added to this problem.

We have now walked through how I tied this fly. Hopefully there were a few ideas that will help in your tying, as that was the principle reason for this article. In critiquing the fly, I wish I had maintained a little more wing height. Adding a sixth topping may have provided that height. I did end up a little short on the claret body section from the length of the other body sections. I had also hoped to avoid having topping barbs falling below the tail outline, but a couple still managed to get down there. Finally, I didn't quite get the consistent angle out of the throat veilings I was looking for. It's close, but no cigar.

MORE QUESTIONS

Ron Higashiyama

I've come up with more questions to ask the membership. I'd like to see what solutions you have to these tying problems I've run across:

1. After awhile, the topping sags (I blame gravity) and droops past the tail. I've been very careful in nicking and tying the topping in, but it still eventually droops. It's especially frustrating after the fly is framed or domed. Is there any way to prevent this? Or does gravity always get its way?

2. My heads end up with a slant (some tyers call it a "slanting forehead"). I've learned to stagger my materials and I know that as you add materials (horns, topping, etc.), the "forehead" may slope. I've tried tying "back over", but this causes the wings, etc. to be forced down and change shape. Any solution to this?

3. I think I understand the reason a "roof" is added to the fly. Besides being decorative, the roof covers the "burn" marks left by the thread sliding over the wing. The problem I ran into is that the roof wants to "stand up" after I've tied it in. I work and shape the mallard, then use "soft" wraps to tie it in, but the far side tends to get pulled down. This causes the front to split and the roof tends to stand up away from the wing. What am I still doing wrong? Or is there a certain texture of the mallard needed when it is used?

4. I like the look of a full wing (24 or more fibers in it). This often causes the wing to be wider than the gap of the hook (I usually use a 4/0). Some tyers I've had critique my flies say this is too high and the width and height of the wing should be about the same as the hook gap. I'd like some feedback from the membership on this. Should I try to achieve the same width, or just go for what I like?

These are the questions I have. I'm sure I'll come up with more as my tying evolves. I hope we get a good response with answers from the membership.

P.S. The centerfold of the last "challenge" was fantastic (The Salmon Flyer, Vol. 5, #4). It was fascinating to see the diversity of interpretations that came from the pattern listed. The imagination of the individual tyers was fascinating. I tied the pattern to send in, but procrastinated long enough that I missed out. I won't miss the next challenge by Dave Paris. The flies that are tied in this next challenge should REALLY be interesting since Dave gave a loose guideline on what to do.

HAND POSITIONING IN WINGING

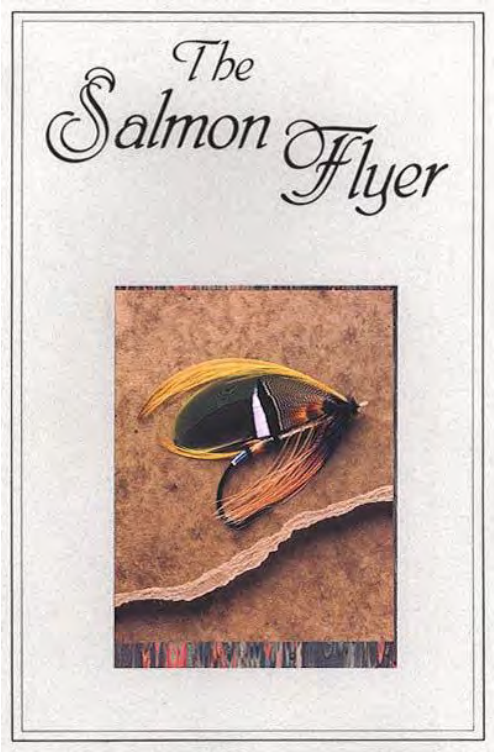
Wayne Luallen

In 1985 while teaching a feather wing class, I was asked why my wing, after tying on, stayed parallel with the hook shank and the other students' wings were more vertical. As the instructor, I was expected to have the answer. It goes without saying that the teacher has to know more than the student! In this situation I did not know the answer, but was determined to figure it out. Luckily it did not take long to discover that when tying on the wing slips, the angle I held my fingers over the slips was influential in establishing the ultimate angle that the wing would take in relationship to the body. This, I have since learned, applies when tying any sort of similar feather wing, whether it be a Lead Wing Coachman wet fly or a Black Doctor salmon fly.

Most vise heads have a jaw angle of approximately 30 degress off horizontal. In teaching, I have found that tilting the student's vise head upward to approach 35-45 degrees will allow more opportunity to get the heel of the "wing hand" down which in turn will let the fingers gripping the slips to be more parallel with the hook shank. Ultimately this leads to a wing lying more parallel to the shank.

I also encourage the student to grip the wing slips with thumb and middle finger rather that the thumb and index finger. Whether the vise head does or does not allow for an increased angle, the use of the thumb and middle finger will by itself place the grip on the wing slips more parallel to the hook shank than thumb and index finger can. To prove this, place the hand that normally holds the wing slips out in a normal position for mounting a wing. Place the index finger against the thumb, then switch the index finger with the middle finger. Note that the index finger lays at a different plane when compared to that of the thumb. The middle finger is in direct apposition with the thumb (actually, the ring finger is closer still to apposition with the thumb than the middle finger but there is less strength and dexterity in the former). The middle finger is also generally more equal in breadth to the thumb than is the index finger is. This equality of width allows a more even hold of pressure on the wing slips.

From the lesson I learned nine years ago, I now teach control of finger position and an improved equalness of pressure on the wing slips which in turn has eliminated having my students' wings at a different plane than the one I am attempting to teach. If the student chooses to have a parallel wing or a higher wing, it can now be done purposefully rather than by accident. Any wing can be mounted with confidence and in a desirable position as long as the foundation is flat, the various textures of wing strips are properly positioned and married, the thread is properly positioned and pulled and the hand and fingers are properly positioned to hold the slips.



ON THE COVER

"Inauguration"

Dave Paris

Tag: Silver Twist and Light Blue Floss
Tail: Topping
Butt: Black Herl
1st Joint: Silver Tinsel Veiled with Indian Crow and Butted with Black Herl
2nd Joint: Creme Floss, Ribbed with Silver Lace and hackled with Moluccan Cockatoo Crest
Wing: Green Macaw Secondary Coverts
Sides: Barred Woodduck
Throat: Guinea Fowl Dyed Blue
Topping: Double Golden Pheasant Crest
Cheeks: Double Indian Crow
Head: Black Herl
Hook: Paris #2 Bend Custom Hook 6/ 0

This fly was designed after deep contemplation and perusal through Paul Schmookler's book on the Flies of Maj. J. P. Traherne.

What to note is the way the Sides cover the front edge of the Wing. This allows the dresser to actually cut away fibers from the wing to allow the Crests to fall appropriately. To be true to tradition, this Wing must be mounted straight, else, when fished., this fly will whirl like a propeller.

If you try to dress this fly, enjoy the journey! The trip is well worth taking!

REPLIES TO RON

Wm. S. Hrinko

In regards to your questions in the July Salmon Flyer, I hope the following will be helpful to you.

The center quill of a crest should be laying atop the wing. This should prevent it from drooping. Before I frame a fly I mist it with a pump type, plain, hair spray. Hold the fly three feet away an mist both sides, DO NOT SOAK, just mist. This will keep all the feathers in place during framing an transportation. Don't get me wrong, I'm not believer in gluing, waxing or spitting a fly together.

The roof of a fly was added to stabilize it (making it ride correctly) in slow moving currents and large, flat pools. Bronze Mallard, like Woodduck, is unforgiving. It will take on the shape of whatever it is being tied onto. The part of the feather you'll be using is in the center [of the quill], since the fibers must be long enough to dress the fly. The tie-in spot on the feather is at the root, or close to the quill. Here, the fibers are the strongest and hold together well. The tie-in spot on the fly must be smooth, if not, the mallard will resume the shape of the lump or bump and split apart. To prepare the feather, take notice that the fibers are pointed upward from the stem. Stroke the fibers down at a 90º angle from the stem. You'll notice the tips of the fibers are almost straight, keep stroking until all the fibers are remarried. You'll only get two, maybe three, wings from a feather. Use the rest for trout flies. Measure your wing and add five extra fibers. These extra fibers will be folded over. Repeat for the other side. Place both wings together, making sure the five extra fibers are folded over on the inside of the wing. Holding the wing on the topmost portion [of the hook], you'll notice the bottom cupping and the folded parts are back to back. Tie the wings on a the same time, taking two loose wraps. Keeping the center aligned with the main wing, let the sides of the mallard go down the side of the head (you'll fix that next). When the Mallard is straight with the main wing, take a dubbing needle and gently slide the fibers on the side up towards the center, compressing them like an accordion. Repeat this for the other side. Take a few more wraps and secure. From the head, stroke the Mallard rearwards. The folded over section should marry to the main wing and the sides should flair out. This little trick Bill Hunter showed me and looks nice. It takes a little practice, but once you get it, it's a snap.

As for your wings, go for what makes you feel good. Keep in mind that it's your fly. If we all tied the same, what fun would it be, unless you're trying to reproduce someone else's style.

SPEYS, DEES & MORE, OH MY!

Dave Paris

Man cannot live by Full Dress alone. (Although sorme of us -would sure like to!) There are many other facets to Salmon flies that offer challenge and beauty to those willing to explore them. Some of these flies also offer lessons invaluable to dressing Full Dress patterns. The Dee and Spey flies are just two of these styles that can offer a new level of challenge to the Salmon Fly tyer. These flies are sleek and graceful, with widely varying design, construction and coloration. There are even "Crossover" flies, as I call them, which have married or mixed wings and other intricacies. Look to the Dee and Spey patterns to expand your horizons.

The Dee and Spey flies were given birth in the Tay, Spey and Aberdeenshire Dee regions of Scotland (as well as others). These patterns are as old, if not older, than the majority of the Full Dress patterns we have. They run the range from rather spartan, like the Gold Riach (Reech, if you will), to quite complicated, as in the Black Dog, a typical Crossover. In general, these flies tend to be more freeform than Full Dress and the tyer has leeway in the construction.

There are several differences between these flies. Dee flies tend to have Golden Pheasant Crest tails and other tail veilings. The wings are usually simple strips of various Turkey Tails set flat (not so simple!). Lastly, the bodies are generally more complex than that of spey's, i.e., joints and veilings are fairly common on a Dee fly. Conversely, Spey flies typically have no tail, or a very simple tail at most. The wings are often tented Bronze Mallard or upright strips of Turkey Tail. Finally, the bodies are usually simplistic yet ribbed with several different tinsels or flosses.

With the differences duly noted, we can continue looking at the generalities found on all these flies. Underneath all these flies lies an iron which is unusually long in the shank, usually 4 or 5X long. Hence the name, Dee Iron. Next, the bodies are slim and sleek, even when they are dubbed. The most familiar

characteristic to everyone is the long, flowing hackle. This can be palmered up the entire body, over the front half of the body or just put in as a throat. Armed with this knowledge, we can now readily identify the difference between a Dee, Spey or "Crossover" fly.

Often, these flies will offer the tyer new techniques to try or allow us to see materials in a way we never thought of. A great example of this is the body hackle on W. Garden's Dee Fly, Me Gardener, as found in Kelson's. How many of us would ever think to use a topping as a hackle?

Then there are the variations, which are often radical, which can add even more flies to our repitoire. Perhaps the most familiar would be the substitution of White Swan for Cinnamon Turkey in the Akroyd, which gives us the White-Winged Akroyd (either single or double winged). A lesser known, yet similar, change is found in the Tri-Colour. By substituting Red Golden Pheasant Breast for Teal (or Widgeon) in the throat and White Swan for Cinnamon Turkey in the wings, we have a Dee Fly called The Killer.

For anyone who thinks that Spey's, Dee's and Crossover's constitute only two or three percent of the flies available, I offer the following fact. Restricting myself to Kelson, Hale, Francis-Francis, Pryce-Tannatt and Frodin, I catalogued over seventy-five patterns. The list can be found on the next page. I am confident that some of the inclusions will be suspect and may raise some hackles of their own, but using the criteria set forth earlier, these all meet the previous definitions. Does this mean that a fly may fall into more than one category, sure! I never did like to have a closed mind or be decisive about where to pigeonhole (Crown Pigeon, that is) a particular fly.

So, I humbly present to you the following list for your approval and amusement...

The Akroyd (Kelson, p.107 Dee)
The White-Winged Akroyd (Kelson, p.107 Dee)
Balmoral (Kelson, p.109 Dee)
The Black Dog (Kelson, p.115 X-Over)
The Black King (Kelson, p.116 Spey)
Captain Walton (Kelson, p.128 X-Over)
The Carron Fly (Kelson, p.129 Spey)
The Claret Brown (Kelson, p.132 X-Over)
The Dallas Fly (Kelson, p.137 Spey)
The Dunt (Kelson, p.144 Dee)
Ethel (Kelson, p.146 X-Over)
The Fairy King (Kelson, p.147 X-Over)
Floodtide (Kelson, p.149 X-Over)
The Gardener (Kelson, p.151 Dee)
Glen Grant (Kelson, p.153 Spey)
Glentana (Kelson, p.153 Dee)
The Golden Eagle (Kelson, p.155 Dee)
The Gold Riach (Kelson, p.157 Spey)
The Green King (Kelson, p.161 Spey)
The Green Queen (Kelson, p.162 Spey)
The Grey Eagle (Kelson, p.164 Spey)
The Highland Gem (Kelson, p.167 X-Over)
Holland's Fancy (Kelson, p.169 X-Over)
Ike Dean (or Ich Dien) (Kelson, p.169 X-Over)
Lady Caroline (Kelson, p.179 Spey)
Lady Grace (Kelson, p.180 Spey)
Miss Grant (Kelson, p.189 Spey)
Mrs. Grant (Kelson, p.190 X-Over)
Niagara (Kelson, p.192 X-Over)
Pitcroy Fancy (Kelson, p.195 X-Over)
The Purple King (Kelson, p.198 Spey)
The Quilled Eagle (Kelson, p.199 X-Over)
The Red King (Kelson, p.200 Spey)
The Rough Grouse (Kelson, p.203 Spey)
The Silver Ardea (Kelson, p.205 X-Over)
The Black Ardea (Kelson, p.205 X-Over)
Strathspey (Kelson, p.212 Spey)
The Tri-Colour (Kelson, p.217 Dee)

The Killer (Kelson, p.217 Dee)
The Wilson (Kelson, p.221 X-Over)
Yellow Eagle (Kelson, p.222 Spey)
Crane (Hale, p.146 Spey)
Dr. Forbes (Hale, p.150 Dee)
Killer (differs from Kelson) (Hale, p.168 Dee)
McIntyre (Hale, p.174 X-Over)
Mignon (Hale, p.176 Dee)
Ivanhoe (Hale, p.202 X-Over)
Lady of the Lake (Hale, p.202 Spey)
The Gled Wing (Francis, p.13 Dee)
The Tartan (Francis, p.13 Dee)
Various Eagles (3) or Aigle (Francis, p.14 Spey)
Mr. Brown's #4 for the Don (Francis, p.15 Spey)
Mr. Brown's #5 for the Don (Francis, p.15 Dee)
Mr. Brown's #6 for the Don (Francis, p.15 Dee)
Sir Alexander's #4 (Findhorn)(Francis, p.30 X-Over)
Sir Alexander's #5 (Findhom)(Francis, p.31 X-Over)
Sir Alexander's #6 (Findhorn)(Francis, p.31 X-Over)
Sir Alexander's #8 (Findhorn)(Francis, p.31 X-Over)
The Lord James Murray (Francis, p.35 X-Over)
The Plain Shannon (Francis, p.35 X-Over)
The Spey Dog (Francis, p.40 Spey)
Mr. Haynes #6 for the Lee (Francis, p.58 Spey)
Jock o' Dee (Pryce, p. 231 Dee)
Moonlight (Pryce, p.231 Dee)
Grey Heron (Pryce, p.233 Spey)
The Black Heron (Frodin, p. 29 Spey)
The Culdrain Fly (Frodin, p.58 Spey)
The Gold Speal (Frodin, p.58 Spey)
The Silver Speal (Frodin, p.58 Spey)
The Gold-Green Fly (Frodin, p.58 Spey)
The Silver-Green Fly (Frodin, p.58 Spey)
The Gold Reeach (Frodin, p.95 Spey)
The Silver Reeach (Frodin, p.95 Spey)
The Gold-Green Reeach (Frodin, p.95 Spey)
The Silver-Green Reeach (Frodin, p.95 Spey)
The Brown Heron (Frodin, p.105 Spey)
The Orange Heron (Frodin, p.105 Spey)
Various Eagles (Frodin, p.194 Dee)

Now we can get into the meaty stuff like hooks, materials and methods of application.

As I mentioned earlier, a traditional Dee Iron is about 4 or 5X long. Most of these hooks are no longer readily available as blind eyes, so it may behoove you to make your own in this case. Following the directions given by several recent articles, it is possible to achieve very good results. Just keep in mind that the length of the shank makes the heat treating and tempering process a bit more crucial. If you prefer to use eyed hook than you have several choices. Arguably, the best choice is a Partridge "N" Iron. Most original Dee irons had a straight shank and a sort of Limerick & Sproat Bend. Throwing this into the wind and opting for a different effect, the Alec Jackson Spey Hooks make a lovely base on which to tie these flies. Other fine irons are the Francis-Francis hooks from Belviordale, the Daiichi 2421, the Tiemco 7999 and most recently, Bob Veverka's Classic Salmon Hook (currently only available in size 2). In my experience, the sizes should range from a #4 to a 5/0 (if you really want to push it?) Most people I have spoken with and my personal preference is around a 1/0. It offers plentiful shank and materials are easy to find for this size.

Beginning with the body, the most important factor to keep in mind when dressing these flies is the fact that the bodies are meant to be slim. It is easy to do this when they are composed of floss or Berlin, but when it gets to seal, sparse and tight is the key. If you use the order of tie in as tag, tinsels, hackle, body, throat and finally the wing, the resultant body should contain sufficient wraps for strength, yet be minimally bulky. You can use the standard techniques of stripping tinsels to the core and undoing

batch of weak thread and untempered hooks! If you want to see the scars, I'll gladly send you a picture. A wayward blade can also wreak havoc with fibers, so just go slow and let the blade do all the work.

In the next issue, we'll cover the actual mounting of those perennial favorites like Bronze Mallard and the Fashionable Dee wing. This should keep you hanging on! Until then, may your spey hackle always be swept waaaaaaay back!

The Salmon Flyer
Vol. 7 - No. 1, Winter, 1995

CLASSIC FLIES WITH A FRENCH ACCENT

Pierre Pepin

In a letter to the editor, published last year, you will probably remember that I had pointed out, among other things, the hurdles I had to overcome as an apprentice. Shortly after the letter's publication, I started feeling a little uneasy because of the possibility that I had mislead some of you into thinking that these were the problems of the local expert Classic fly dresser.

In an effort to restore the truth, I embarked on a mission: I came out of my anonymity and sought out individuals with much greater experience, talent and notoriety than my own in order to bring you up to date concerning the local Classic fly dressing scene.

Since there appears to have been very little information available and/or volunteered to "nonresident" authors, I thought that you might be just a bit. curious about these French Canadian fly dressers. While this article may not be a masterpiece of journalism, I hope that it will provide you with an accurate and comprehensive portrait of Quebec's fly tying scene, and this, from an insider's point of view.

My greatest allies in this quest were my copies of The Salmon Flyer, they got me admitted and welcomed into the homes and the privacy of these fly tiers and Classic dressers. I found out that Classic fly dressing in Quebec is alive... and well. It is a prolific and creative environment but it can also be very competitive.

previous wraps to further minimize bulk. Body wraps should be taken tightly, no matter what the material, and the tinsels should also be wrapped tight. Using a bodkin to keep the hackle out of the way makes the body and crossing tinsel much easier to wrap.

As we all now know, the biggest visual key to these flies is the hackle and its lay in relation to the body. We want them to have a swept back, sleek, or as Mike McCoy would say, "Wicked" appearance. Achieving this is merely a matter of understanding the hackle itself. The two most common hackles in use for these flies are Blue Eared Pheasant (as a sub for Heron) and Schlappen (as a substitute for Spey Cock). While no two feathers could be more dissimilar, their application is just as different. Heron is typically used over the front half of the body or even just at the throat while the Spey Cock is used over the entire body. Heron is also tied in conventionally, by its tip, when the Spey Cock is tied in at its 'root' or fat end. As a rule, both of these hackles are stripped of one side prior to tie in and the side stripped determines the direction of wrap around the body. An example is stripping the left side (with the good side facing you) to wrap conventionally, that being from under the shank around the near side and then over the top. By stripping the right side (again with the good side facing you) to wrap reverse, typically with Spey Cock, which starts under the shank and around the far side and then over the top and towards you. The previous directions should be reversed for a left-handed tyer. To achieve this swept back look, use the fibers themselves to help guide the quill into the correct angle while you're wrapping the hackle. With Schlappen, the windswept look is gained by simply stroking the fibers backwards and letting them marry to each other. The single biggest help in a nice, dean hackle job is to strip the quill at the tie in point and leave a good quarter inch of bare quill before the fibers start, this gives you an area of quill which can twist into the correct orientation without having errant fibers running amok, just take it into account when the planning is going on so your hackle can still appear to start in the right place!

To this point, at lot of this is pretty basic, but I wanted to be complete for the newer dressers among us. Besides, I often forget the basics!

In general, the order I like to tie in is as follows...

1 Tie In Gut for Eye
2 Tie In Tinsels and Run Thread to Bend
3 Tie In Tag, Wrap Tag
4 Tie In Body
5 Tie In Hackle
6 Wrap Body
7 Wrap All Ribs Running With Hackle
8 Wrap Hackle
9 Wrap Crossing Rib
10 Tie In Throat, Wrap Throat
11 Tie In Wings
12 Finish Preening

Getting into the throat, the two most desirable characteristics are long, straight fibers and a really thin quill. The thin quill helps us by not adding to the bulk we must go around when mounting the wings. To prepare the throat, strip away the side which is normal for you and trim the tip of the feather to give you a good tie in point. Take only a turn or two, lest the throat grab too much attention visually. Tie it off with as few wraps as possible. I'll generally use two, maybe three and then unwind one while I'm mounting the wing. I'll always leave a little quill however, which will be bound down in the following steps and make the throat a bit more stable.

Speaking of wings, now comes the part you've probably waited three pages for. As I said earlier, wings can be made from many different materials. Ducks like Mallard (Bronze, please), Gadwall, Teal, Merganser, Etc. as just as useful as Goose shoulders, dyed Swan, strips of Turkey or Pheasant wing or tail. The secret to winging either a Spey or a Dee is in the proper handling of the wing while it is still on the quill. Duck fibers should be stripped off the quill so as to leave the attachment filament at the root of the fiber, this will keep the butts together. Wings and tails require some delicate work. In order to keep the butts together on these materials, you must leave them with a piece of quill attached. This will also benefit you by providing a handle for you to steer the material into place. The most reliable way to accomplish this is to split the quill lengthwise and then use a single edge razor to cut out the section you need. Just please be careful using these blades, they have the potential to ruin your month faster than a

An Atlantic Salmon Sportfishing Economy

Moisie, Matane, Matapedia, Cascapedia... these names among others should conjure up fond memories of past fishing trips and the expectations of future ones. As most of you already know, the St. Lawrence's North shore and the Gaspe peninsula, between them, harbor more than their fair share of North America's remaining Atlantic Salmon rivers.

These rivers have remained viable until today, mostly due to their remoteness and isolation. Another factor which could have also contributed is that almost all of these rivers had been privately owned or managed for a long periods of time. The past fifty years were punctuated by profound changes to the salmon rivers management organization: Governmental buy backs, lease cancellations, shared management and voluntary renunciations of river ownership (in favor of dedicated flyfisher associations) has tremendously helped to popularize the sport by making it accessible and affordable to a great number of enthusiasts. Starting with the Matane in 1949, this river "democratization" program provided the first public access to salmon waters. Today, thousands of resident and nonresident flyfishers return annually to small towns and isolated communities to indulge in their favorite sport. The Atlantic Salmon sportfishing "industry" which annually generates multi-million dollar revenues has taken such vital proportions for several regional tourism industries that the federal and the provincial governments had no other choice than to partake to the recent international measures implemented to insure the King of Fishes future and survival at sea. I guess the point I am trying to get across with all of this "propaganda" is that if actually there are between ten and fifteen thousand "resident" flyfishers... wouldn't you expect to find at least a couple of hundred Atlantic Salmon fly tiers and amongst those a few Classic fly dressers? Of course, most of these fly tiers have primarily resorted to fly tying as a hobby, an extension of sorts in face of a short flyfishing season. For them, a big part of the fun is to compare "notes" with fellow tiers and to discover some new "secret weapon" in somebody else's arsenal. Furthermore, it is true that, by far, the majority of salmon flies tied and encountered nowadays in Quebec are hairwings, but one can still find, hidden in fly boxes, featherwing Classic patterns (timid attempts, personal endeavors and triumphs).

Despite the dramatic decline of the Classics usage, interest seems to have bottomed out and leveled off a few years ago and since, there are signs of a very timid but sustained resurgence of these patterns as "works of art". One likely explanation of why it took such a long time to locally halt the Classics decline, is conceivably because the effects of the river "democratization" program were not significantly felt until the 1970s, after that. it took another ten years for this "new breed" of flyfishers and fly tiers to get thoroughly acquainted with the Atlantic Salmon flyfishing's and fly tying's heritage. While salmon fishing is still being falsely perceived at large as a sport for the mega-rich, the majority of today's fanatics is composed by either middle class city dwellers or local riverside inhabitants. As a consequence of the sport's growth, new tiers are now joining the ranks of the "established" Classic fly dressers, aroused and enticed by the Art's challenge, by a desire to show off their dexterity or simply by an need to express themselves artistically with a familiar medium.

Importing the Sport and the Classics

Prior to the British conquest of New France in 1763, sportfishing and specially flyfishing for Atlantic Salmon was virtually unheard of in Quebec. Although colonial documents, dating back to the 17th and 18th centuries, reveal that salmon were abundant and spawned as far West as Montreal (I read somewhere that the salmon's dispersal had been as far West as Niagara Falls ?!), it seems that the settlers and their French administrators thought very little of the King of Fishes other than being a "renewable" and easy to capture food supply. This gross misconception lead to excesses. I remember being told old stories about some farmers living along rivers that used salmon as a crop fertilizer.

The first Classic flies to actually swim in Quebec's rivers were introduced very early in the 19th century by British military personnel, administrators and businessmen out on expeditions spot checking and searching for "new" hunting and fishing territories. Within a few short years, word got around about salmon angling's exceptional potential. By the 1840s, Atlantic Salmon flyfishing had firmly established itself as the new trend with the "rich and famous" French and English families of Montreal and Quebec City. The closer and most accessible salmon rivers (Quebec City region) were then owned by French families through seigniorial rights, but within a few years, in response to the great demand, the Crown sold or leased most of the other salmon rivers titles (Gaspe peninsula and North Shore) to local and foreign interests, clubs and corporations.

In practical terms, this meant that salmon fishing would remain a rich man's sport and as a consequence, its paraphernalia would also remain a private affair for almost a century (1840-1940). Even though, during this period, flyfishing for trout did start to interest "ordinary" anglers, it would be quite some time before they could have access to salmon fishing because agricultural and industrial pollution, logging and river damming would soon kill off all native salmon runs spawning in rivers West of the Saguenay's Fjord. This extraordinary- man-made ecological disaster would be finalized and completed by the beginning of the 20th century.

During this period (1840-1940), the only people other than the "Sports" who started tying salmon flies were North Shore and Gaspe residents employed as their game wardens, guides, gillies and cooks. It is while catering to their employers, that they were exposed to the Classic flies which were being "imported" from the United States, the Maritime provinces and Europe.

Learning the "Hard Way"

The fishing clubs employees were generally riverside inhabitants, sea fishermen, woodsmen and lumberjacks of French, English and Native descents. Recognizing ,a good thing after observing the "Sports" tender loving care for their flies and also their frustration when losing or breaking them, the locals figured out that they could probably supply fora handsome profit locally tied "replacements".

These new and sell-improvised "entrepreneurs" were often faced with significant handicaps ringing from a limited formal education which could mean a limited or an nonexistent understanding of written English) to restricted financial resources which made the acquisition of pattern catalogs and of exotic materials nearly impossible.

Nevertheless, using their personal ingenuity, they taught themselves fly tying by trying to copy the Classics that had been given to them. A method which provided them with good results consisted of "undressing" (carefully unwrapping) a Classic fly in order to figure out how it had been initially assembled, step by step. You could call this a trial and error method but some tiers would be successful, after a lot of practice, in recreating the patterns with substitutes feathers, while others would resort to simpler materials such as animal hair which brought about a different salmon fly style. (By the way, I aim not hereby claiming that the Gaspe tiers are THE inventors ofthe hairwing, but keep in mind that the Gaspe residents were, over the years, comparing notes with their family- relatives living in New Brunswick.)

When and only if they persevered long enough in this commercial venture, these tiers and their interpretations of the Classic flies would eventually catch the "Sports" attention. The more gifted and talented tiers were thus "discovered" and often received constructive criticism, help and sometimes finermaterials from the "Sports". Some locals would eventually establish for themselves and their families a noteworthy regional reputation which allowed them to tie on a flourishing commercial basis.

While under-education (by- today's standards) prevailed within those regions almost into the 1930s, the bulk of tire craft's knowledge was past ore from one generation to the other orally! Training an apprentice, usually a family relative, often meant that he or she would have to learn and to memorize all the craft's techniques and patterns. (This could explain to a certain extent flue existence of the multitude of local Classic pattern variations.) Such a training process implies that the elder gave a demonstration of a particular technique, then the apprentice would have to repeat its execution until his skill level allowed hint to obtain a consistently satisfying result prior to proceeding to the next phase of his training. With the 20th century, living conditions did unproved and consequently so did the accessibility to higher schooling levels. Tying instructions and patterns did get written down but think about how many local patterns have been "forgotten" and lost in the mean time.

Horror stories still circulate concerning famous "outsiders" who had, way back then, benefited from the elder tiers predicament and geographic isolation. These "outsiders" have supposedly appropriated and claimed for themselves the glamour of having originated certain patterns while these were local creations from the start. Being personally unable to substantiate any of these stories, I nevertheless brought the subject up because there are a few locals who still firmly believe them and this could explain some of my fellow tiers initial distrust of "outsiders".

While researching material for this article, Mr. Denys Poirier showed me a momento worthy of mention: Mrs. Jean-Paul Dub,'s personal pattern book put together some 50 years ago and used for training purposes. This booklet looked just like an ordinary notebook in which one would write down addresses

and special events, but its contents revealed a few treasures : each page was devoted to a single Classic pattern. The pattern's name was inscribed at the page's top immediately followed by a fullydressed fly's illustration. This illustration had been cut out from a catalog or a plate (a Hardy Brothers catalog ???). Below these, the listing of materials had been written down in the conventional tying order, and the surprise which made this notebook seem so exceptional was the fact that Mrs. Dub, had glued a sample of each to the page's margin and every material to be used according to the line's inscription : a Crest,.. a Jungle Cock,.. Indian Crow,.. a sample of every fiber to be married in the wing,.. etc.. The person who wanted to tie this or that pattern could identify the pattern with the illustration, follow the listing by choosing the material according to the margin's visual reference and the resulting flies would all have the same consistent colors and appearance.

The pool of traditional fly tying knowledge has since greatly deteriorated due to pre- and post- Second World War local economic recessions: most of these craftsmen descendants have migrated to more promising areas of the province, and with them dispersing the traditional knowledge. The tiers I have interviewed, are positive and agree that there remains only one such tier who learned the Art from the family elders: Mare Leblanc, now living in the town of Maria, Gaspe. He was taught fly dressing by his aunt Carmelle Bigaouette, who herself had been tutored by her uncles L.A. and T.A. Lapointe.

Contemporary Fly Dressing

Although the traditional fly dressing lineage seems to be on the brink of extinction, the same river "democratization" program, that produced a new breed of flyfishers, has also produced a new generation of fly dressers. Knowledgeable and reliable sources estimate that there are between 100 and 150 active Classic fly dressers now residing ing in Quebec, among them a dozen or more outstanding and "World Class" dressers. This information is probably as astonishing to you as was learning about Salmon Flyers and The Group's existence for the people I interviewed. Before discarding this estimate as being grossly exaggerated, please consider the following details. First of all, the nature of the question asked:"How many Quebec residents tie fullydressed featherwing Classic flies on a regular basis?" Secondly, that it is legitimate to assume that the serious apprentices and the up and coming achievers were counted in along with the expert. level dressers. Finally, in an Atlantic salmon environment, that a ratio of one (1) Classic dresser per one hundred (100) salmon flyfishers does sound reasonable. On the other hand, please contain your excitement over these numbers, do not expect to find our "Yellow Pages" overloaded with Classic fly vendors advertisements nor Classic fly shops on every street corner ! In fact, when I started out, I had to do some patient research to track down my would-be collaborators, but once I got in touch with one tier or another, he would offer to help contacting his personal network of acquaintances. The process actually reversed itself and it was the tiers who were tracking me down and proposed to set up meetings !..

If you were hoping for the typical dresser's description and pedigree, I am sorry to say that there is no such person because today's Classic tiers come from a wide variety of backgrounds and lifestyles ranging from white to blue collar workers, from professionals to technicians, from laborers to classically trained musicians, etc..

The only common personality denominators are:

1. Being involved, at one point or another in their life, with Atlantic Salmon fishing.

2. Exhibiting the same intensity and passion when discussing Classic fly dressing.

The local Classic fly tying community seems to be artistically divided into two main schools of thought: the hard core "Conservatives" and the modern "Liberals". I am not referring to local politics but rather to the influences which characterize the fly styles and dressing practices (in reality there are no such groups nor gatherings!..). The "Conservatives", to which a majority of tiers subscribe to, set their achievement standards by Dr. Pryce-Tannatt for his tying techniques and by Kelson for his patterns beauty and complexity. While my so-called "Liberals" (often younger tiers), prefer Poul Jorgensen's straightforward and functional approach while advocating the merits of Ken Sawada's flamboyant arrangements and style. It is hard to decide which of the two groups is the righteous beholder and keeper of the faith, but you can imagine that this dilemma has been the subject of many heated discussions that sometimes could have easily ended up in verbal clashes.

For my part, I am not about to try to settle the feud (possibly because I consider myself an apprentice), I find both of these styles esthetically pleasing whether the fly is a rigorously disciplined and conform

replica or a free flowing and relaxed creation (Beauty is in the eye of the beholder!). Even though these tiers do always not share the same point of view or the same convictions, even though they may even be commercial competitors, generally speaking they do respect each other's talent and put aside their differences to promote Classic Fly Dressing as a wonderful art form

Instead of presenting and identifying my fellow tiers in order of notoriety and talent which would be subjective, tasteless and even disrespectful, I preferred opting to break down their numbers into three tangible categories based upon the commercialization of their flies. Do not let yourself be fooled by the titles given to these categories, you will find outstanding and passionate dressers in each of them.

The Established Professional:

This type of tier sells his fly production through a legitimate business. More often than not, he is a business owner or is self-employed Classic fly dressing is usually a supplemental income to another Atlantic Salmon related occupation such as being a river guide, a commercial hairwing tier, fly casting and/or fly tying instructor and fishing equipment and/or fly tying material salesperson. These people are highly visible and enjoy a certain public notoriety due to their year round implication with flyfishers.

The Semiprofessional:

This tier operates from his home and sells his flies to businesses or directly to customers. This venture's main objective is to finance the expensive materials for his own personal use rather than to make a profit. More often than not, others have encouraged or solicited him to sell his flies.

The Amateur:

This is the most secretive and private of tiers. He ties strictly for his own pleasure and enjoyment. He usually ends up giving away some of his flies to his pestering friends rather than selling them. His trips to the tying supply shop are discrete and short, preferring his intimacy to boisterous conversations about the art. (Sounds familiar to anybody?!)

While it is common to find a few classic flies displayed in salmon related businesses, it would be incorrect of me to pretend that classic featherwings are mass-produced for resale, these flies are tied rather on a "special order" basis. The featherwing patterns most often requested for fishing use are the Green Highlander and the Lady Amherst. The Classics marketplace as works of "art" is very confined but most dressers, I have spoken to, told me of having a regular personal clientele. Usually, the buyers are won over by an artist's display shown in a business or at a flyfishers association's annual meeting. Orders are placed on the spot or later through the mail or over the phone. Needless to say that such social occasions are sought after by the tiers. I have been told that the customers, while few in numbers, are usually wealthy local and foreign collectors, flyfishers and fellow tiers. The price for a fullydressed featherwing classic fly (as works of art) normally fluctuates between $ 100.00 to $ 500.00 cdn. depending on fly's complexity and required materials and also on the tyer's public notoriety. I have been told of a particular locally tied fly having gone up for sale at the exceptional price of $ 2000.00 cdn..

As a consequence of the clientele's size, I was able to sense that a contained rivalry existed among the "pros" and the "semi-pros". This competitive environment could sometimes be compared to those of the Fine Arts or the Music Business scenes with their cliques, their independent artists, the disputes and the conflicting visions of the art. Some tiers accept the skirmishes as part of the business while others prefer to ignore them all together. This curiously reminded me about other famous disputes between some of the Old British Masters. It is sincerely not my intention, by making the previous comparisons, to ridicule nor to criticize the commercial fly tying scene, quite to the contrary I intended to use these as an argument to demonstrate the scene's existence and seriousness.

As unrefutable proof of the local interest concerning Classic flies, I have to mention the existence of annual tying event: the Atlantic Salmon Fly Tying World Championships. This event is presented by the Fédération Québécois du Saumon Atlantique (F.Q.S.A.) and sponsored by its corporate affiliates. This event is considered by many as being the season's most significant local fly tying event. At this tournament, you will find different involvement and determination levels among the participants: some are very serious competitors for whom the final outcome is capital for their personal self-esteem and/or prestige, while others enter and participate just for pleasure, on a friendly basis, merely to see how their flies get rated. Unfortunately, as with any kind of tournament, there are locals who completely ignore this type of event because competitions (implying tying along guidelines, rules and specific criteria), in their

global perception of the artform, basically strips their personal tying style from its soul. Call these people "free spirits" if you wish, but I think that other dressers should respect their position. I have been impressed, like many others, by unconventional and outlandish creations tied by such believers.

Considering that this event's main objectives are to promote the art form and to encourage the creation of new fly styles and patterns, the consensus, my collaborators agreed upon (no matter their beliefs concerning the competitive aspect), was that the Championships do have positive repercussions mainly because of the wider scale of exposure it provides to classic fly dressing and to its artists in general. With time, the F.Q.S.A.'s Championships have really evolved into an international event by attracting tiers from abroad (U.S.A. and Scandinavian countries). I confirmed this by sampling through the previous years entries, to my surprise, I even found flies entered by the Group's members.

Miscellany

Beyond and regardless of the current political circumstances, Classic fly tying in Quebec has evolved and generally continues to develop in isolation of other North American tying circles, its obvious cause is the language barrier.

Being predominantly unilingual, most of our tiers initial hurdle is obtaining precise information about classic tying practices. Even though there has been, over the last three decades, close to a dozen books locally written and published (in French) concerning Atlantic salmon fishing and general tying practices, only a few pages can be found about the classics. Evidently, these tiers will logically turn to American and British publications for their requirements. Thus equipped, their tying progress will be temporarily slowed down but this problem is usually solved by translating the texts (word by word) with a good old dictionary. Knowing this, do not be surprised if you meet colleagues who have mastered the mechanics of written English but still have a hard time grasping the dynamics and phonics of spoken English. There are bilingual tiers among our members and we do occasionally entertain privileged relater with foreign tiers. My advice to you is: do not get immediately turned off by the heavy accent and by other communication problems, be patient. A lot of my fellow tiers like to exchange and compare notes.

The biggest current problem facing all local fly dressers is the scarcity of basic classic materials (even Jungle Cock for example). I am talking about quality and legally raised feathers obtained through legitimate sources. I seriously doubt that any of the locals would be interested in paying ludicrous prices for illegal stuff. A major deterrent which you should be aware of is that a Canadian dollar is as hard (even harder!) to earn as an American dollar, so with the current exchange rates, forget it ! Anyhow, as a consequence of being implicated with the salmon conservation movements and with the growing numbers of catch and release advocates, the local tiers are conscious of and respect the endangered species protection policies, so... "Vive les substitutes".

Finally, I leave you with the pictures accompanying this article, you should be able to sample the work of tiers who dress Classics with a French accent.

Conclusion

Clearly, this article was not written with the intent of putting Quebec fly tiers on a pedestal or claiming that they are THE best. I simply tried to inform and to promote their existence. Being somewhat restrained by time, I tried to provide you with the big picture. The details and factual comments are based on several interviews. Writing this was like putting together an enormous jigsaw puzzle with a few missing pieces. If this article's content presents factual errors, I invite and welcome others to bring the appropriate corrections. I would like to thank the tiers who helped me and/or submitted themselves to my inquiries:

Benoit Lavigne, Daniel Pancaldi Francois, Gravel, Denys Poirier, Paul Leblanc, Claude Page, Michel Beaudin, Eric Barz.

YOU DIDN'T ASK, BUT . . .

Comments from Bat Back Black, First Under-Secretary: Pacific Rim Chapter of Predators R Us.

ObtigatoryWarning:

The Surgeon General (No, not the fly pattern) warns that the following comments often must be taken with a grain of salt, read loosely between the lines, or at least diluted with enormous helpings of pasta.

Well, to quote the most infamous Male on American TV, "Let's Rock!"

Guess who is the Person I'm most grateful to when it comes to Salmon Fly Tying? (as are many other tiers) The answer can be found later in this article.

Tying on 7/0 to 10/0 hooks is fun - casting them is not!

Use of exotic or rare materials is over-rated, over-priced and wasted on flies when tied by beginners or intermediates.

Tying Jock Scotts, woolly worms Light Cahills and streakers isn't art to me, even though Picasso is alleged to have said "if it's good, it's art."

The end justifies the means when tying exhibition flies. Who's to say what is right or wrong. Not me.

Tier is spelled T-I-E-R, not tyer.

There are few ugly patterns, just poorly tied flies.

Hard to find commonly used items: 1) Quality small ostrich for butts. 2) Silkworm gut. 3) Golden Pheasant Crests for tails. 4) Chicken feathers for body hackle.

I never use English Jay feathers, nor do I care for dyed guinea feathers as a substitute (they are often dyed too dark). I just use natural spotted guinea. Kenya Crested Guinea is OK, but its fibers are coarser.

Any feathers around the house that haven't been used in five years? Why? Poor quality stuff, here & there? Why?

The Salmon Fly Tag - better way too small than too big.

If you tie a Salmon Fly mostly at one time and it looks like a stink bait, try tying just a portion of it at a sitting. It is difficult to maintain concentration over a long period of time.

Salmon Fly Tying is like chess or war. Know the opponent (fly pattern) and identify the strengths, problems and weaknesses in it. Having done that, anticipate each step and its consequences.

If we can't criticize, we can't correct.

Speys and Dees were also tied on regular length hooks and they looked good too.

Desire over skill anytime in Salmon Fly tying. Desire will find a way, skill can quit.

An under-rated, beautiful pattern - low water March Brown.

The Blue Charm may be, step-by-step, the most difficult fly to tie. I've never seen a good one.

I think Syd Glasso tied better-looking Dees than Speys.

Willam F. Blades - Never be another! Simply the all-around best! The da Vinci of fly tying.

Speaking of... Leonardo da Vinci is the person I'm the most grateful to when it comes to Salmon Fly tying. Why? Gotta keep reading.

Circle which of the following should be saved...

a) The Ancient Forests b) Antique Salmon Flies c) Muslinm maps of Bosnia d) This article.

A humbling experience... On October 7, 1993 1 spent 1hr 30min getting the tail and its veiling on Jock Scott. At this rate, U.S. Troops will be out of Somalia before this fly is completed. (I beat the troops by several months).

The true beauty of a Salmon Fly can only be viewed in natural sunlight.

A well-tied throat hackle will add unsurpassed beauty to the fly. Poorly applied and checkmate!

Never seen quality Badger hackle for Salmon Fly tying.

Trivia Time: What is the significance of these numbers: 2500,8000,25000?

[Respectively, the numbers of feathers on a house sparrow, chicken and swan. (It's true!, I counted them – Really!)]

It helps to have a visual aid like an Opti-Visor. Mine has a 2X lens.

If you think your fly has that mechanical (paint by numbers) or sterile (too perfect) look try and tie with more freedom. Relax, be less demanding and be more easygoing - sort of hippy vs yuppie like.

The rules you learned about Salmon Fly tying may have reigned you in too tight. Realize that your corners can be more rounded, your creases don't have to be as crisp or your edges as sharp as you think.

To quote a phrase, "Salmon Fly tying isn't brain surgery." If it were, I'd have bodies piling up everywhere. Mistakes are virtually made during every step when tying. My goal then becomes keeping the errors small and try and hide them (example: If blood is spurting two feet in the air, I'll stop the bleeding with a Jungle Cock compress) Don't be afraid to make a mistake, even a biggie. If the Salmon Fly dies in the vise before you, cheer up and just start over – something you can't often do in "Brain Surgery".

The tier must be flexible - adaptability is important. Rules or guidelines often are obstacles in disguise. Hang the rules - beauty is the only reason to do something.

When tying, if something is bothering you about the fly stop and correct it or just start over. Until you understand this, that `Light Saber' will remain just a flashlight!

Leonardo da Vinci invented the scissors to demonstrate leverage. Ever try tying a fly without using a scissor?

It wouldn't take much to convince me that E. Crosfield wasn't the best Salmon Fly tier of his day as some people claimed during his time.

The modern day Salmon Fly tier has a tremendous advantage in that he can study the many beautiful styles of past tiers.

The antique tiers' advantage is, of course, they have never seen the modern tiers' style.

Even though it seems the craze is to tie large exhibition Salmon Flies, I wish there was more emphasis on smaller hooks - #2 - #6 or smaller. Every time I see a small antique Salmon Fly, I stare at it in wonder.

"They form a fascinating group, as they require considerable artistic skill and, manipulative dexterity to turn out satisfactorily." Pryce-Tannatt on Small Summer Patterns.

Check Point Charlie - If you have a rotating vise, use it! After you complete each step while tying at least rotate the vise to see how the "Far Side" looks. However, the best view is to just turn the vise around to look at it properly. Then look at it from a distance, say three feet, for a good perspective.

Exhibition Salmon Flies should be like exhibition ballroom dancing - elegant and graceful.

Upon completion of a fly - don't hate it or love it till at least three days later.

Educate the eyes to distinguish anything unusual or different, no matter how insignificant, then scream out "Why is it different!" Then, if you like it, can you duplicate it over again intentionally.

We often go to extremes to accomplish things - often it results in extremes too.

Given a choice, it's best to tie in natural sunlight. July 30 is often the best day of the year to tie in the Northern Hemisphere.

Know your limitations - if you tie poor wool or herl heads, don't have them on your flies until you practice getting them right.

Spotted Guinea is the best throat hackle there is.

Secrets on Dyeing - Heat the dyed water - stick the material in. I accept the results. Can't get consistency and the color desired? Who cares?!

The Jock Scott designed in the 1850's - Too bad it leaves us with no hope to ever design a better pattern. "Thanks guy, you putz!

"All that glitters is not gold" - Most, if not all, lay people will think any full dressed Salmon Fly is "Gorgeous". This weakens the good Salmon fly's reputation.

Humor is a tremendous asset to bring to the fly vise. After spending hours fighting a Torrish and having the Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse tapping on my shoulder, I know I can still laugh at fate - the fly and the rubber hose from my car's exhaust.

Likewise, a terrible temper can be an asset. Tying hour after hour in a frustrating stupor, making mistake after mistake, there comes a time when - I'm not gonna take it any more! Suddenly, a baby mushroom cloud appears over the fly. The terrible Genie is unleashed and the fly is no more. With surprisingly little fallout, once more the atmosphere about the vise is again serene and again the world seems like a better place.

It's not a good sign when words such as "Fetid" and "Miasma" are used in a critique of your fly. However, consider "Succulent" the highest compliment.

When criticizing a beginner's fly, approach it like a pod of Orcas attacking a school of bluefin tuna. Disagree? Don't you think any surviving tuna will be a better and smarter tuna?!

Just a thought - if there were environmental cavemen (and there weren't at the time of Tyrannosaurs Rex) and T. Rex were an endangered species would they try and save them? And where would we be if birds never developed feathers?

Isn't it a stroke of luck Indian Crow and Blue Chatterer aren't the size of ostriches?

What we need is a booklet of close-up photos of antique Salmon Flies. "A picture is worth a thousand words."

Am I the only one giving the thumbs down to the books by Hale, Francis-Francis, Kelson, Taverner and, yes, even Pryce Tannatt? There is really so little available to tell us about Salmon Flies of the past that these poorly written books look great because it's all we have.

If you have the two books Classic Salmon Flies by Mikael Frodin and The Art of The Atlantic Salmon Fly by Joseph D. Bates, Jr. turn to page 148 in the first and to Plate XV in the latter. Doesn't the drawing of the Popham in Frodin's book resemble Kelson's Popham in Plate XV (center of plate)? Could it be the flies of Kelson's book are more representative than thought?

The only bumper sticker I've ever owned said: "Be ALERT! We need more LERTS!"

Finally - the buffet ends. If you agree with at least 11 of the previous comments - Toooo Baaad! You have symptoms pointing towards being a LERT!

CRIMP YOUR CROW SUB

Ron Higashiyama

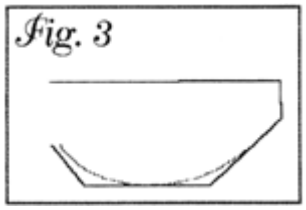
Real Indian Crow is expensive. The going rate seems to be about $4 to $6 dollars (or higher) per feather. As patterns such as the Popham and Indian Crow call for Indian Crow as a veiling, the investment is up to $48 just in body veiling alone. Too steep for my thin pocketbook. To keep from going

to the poorhouse, I use a substitute in my tying. This substitute is made from the white feathers form the neck of the common Ringneck Pheasant, dyed to imitate the colors of' the real stuff. Although the shape and texture is not exactly the same, it's close enough.

Real Indian Crow seems to have a gentle 'hump' near the tips. This hump is missing in the Ringneck subs. I've tried crimping with eyelash curlers. You can put a double crimp in the feather, but they're angled too sharply for my taste (see Fig. 1). It's not the gentle 'hump' you see in the real thing. Another method is to moisten the feather, then gently curve the tips around a stout dubbing needle (or a small diameter metal rod, ed.) This puts a nice curve into the tips, but the hump is still missing (see Fig. 2). The "lay it on glass" technique didn't work very well for me. Sometimes I'm a little short on patience (and time). Watching the subs dry on glass sheet is like watching paint dry. Boring.

The method I use is not new. Marvin Nolte in Bar Nunn, Wyoming, originally sent me a crimper made from a common wooden clothespin (the two-piece, spring variety). All I did was modify the tool to crimp more of a gentle hump in the subs. It works well, and they're easy to make. All you need are a clothespin (again, the two-piece, spring variety), which you probably have laying around the house, two small, thin pieces of soft foam and a couple of small files. They don't even take much time (which most of us don't have to spare anyway) to make.

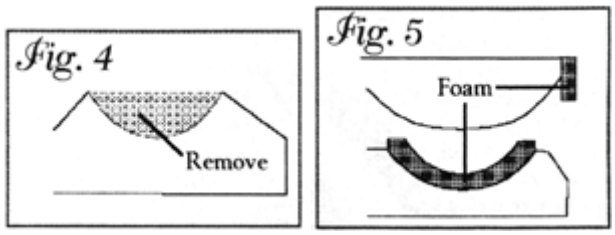
To start, take the clothespin apart because you'll need to modify both jaws. After you've taken it apart, you need to round off the flat spot on one jaw (call it the upper) with a small flat file (see Fig. 3). Make sure thecurve is about the shape of a quarter circle, since this is what's going to help put the hump in the sub. Use your own judgement because the size of the hump depends on what size of fly you tie.



Next, put a rounded groove in the flat spot on the opposite (lower) law. The hump needs to match up with the groove. This doesn't need to be to micro tolerances, but it should match up as close as possible. I lay the jaws back together and mark the area to be removed with a pencil (see Fig. 4). A small hobby rat-tail or half round file will work, or even very a small pocketknife.

The two foam pads needed can be made from any type of foam, as long as it's soft and flexible. The foam I use came from my fly tying kit (the type for foam beetle bodies), or an old pair of neoprene waders you're about to discard. (Don't use your new ones. Holes in waders make for very wet wading!)

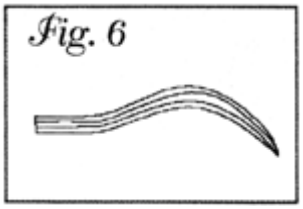
Glue the foam pad into the groove (see Fig. 5). Be sure to use glue that's compatible with the foam. Some glues will cause the foam to disintegrate or become hard. I used a glue stick (the same type of glue stick for paper). Glue the second piece to the tip of the rounded (upper) section (see Fig. 5). After the glue dries, reassemble the pin.



The purpose of the foam in the groove is to give a soft, non-slip surface and close any gaps between the jaws. The foam at the tip will gently bend the feather to add the second hump. I wet the feather with saliva or water (or a drop or two of my scotch and water), gently pulling all the fibers together, then

place it in the crimper (tips first). I let the feather dry for about fifteen minutes. When you take it out, you'll notice quite a dramatic hump in the feather (we'll fix this next).

Gently brush the feather with a mascara brush or an interdental tool (another article for later) to "fan" the fibers. Brushing will remove some of the dramatic curve in the feather. The finished product should have a hump that's very close to the real thing (see Fig. 6).



You can make cruppers in several different sizes for several sizes of flies.

I know this is not the only method to put the hump into subs. let's hear from other members of the Salmon Flyer on the techniques they use to crimp their subs. It's always interesting to try new techniques and variations.

Now, moving on to other business. I've tied the classics for nearly two years. In fact, I gave up tying trout flies for nearly a year (shame on me) because I wanted to concentrate on the techniques used in tying the classics.

Several things come to mind. First, I found there are many tiers willing to share ideas, techniques and sources. Several made videotapes. I was lucky enough to visit with several very nice guys who shared techniques, ideas, materials and time to critique my work candidly. I won't name names, because they know who they are. I still owe lunch and a cup of coffee to one and it's the other's turn to buy dinner at the Chinese restaurant on the next visit.

All of this has helped my tying and increased my appreciation of the beauty and complexity of the classic Atlantic Salmon Fly. Thanks!!

THE MANY SKINS OF MR. KELSON

Bob Arnold

Toward the end of the previous century, one man carne to the fore and has dominated Atlantic Salmon fly design ever since. He is George Kelson - and some of us respectfully choose to call him "Mister," because of his eminence. An opinionated, arrogant man, he offended many not so gifted as he, especially because he was generally right. to make matters worst, he would come back with the biggest bag of fish. This was long before the days of catch-and-release, you understand, so a fisher could not exaggerate his catch and not have to prove his prowess.

Mr. Kelson wrote two books, plus many magazine articles in his time. The Salmon Fly is he one he is best known for. So simply named, it is a marvel of complexity and critical thought; also it lists a great many patterns. The Flyfisher's Classic Library in Devon, England, is soon to reprint it in a fine edition. The Tips is his second book and it is so rare that I have never seen it, but I am told that. it contains very little that is important in terms of patterns, fishing techniques or tying techniques. Only last year The "Land and Water" Salmon Flies was published by The Flyfisher's Classic Library, and it is an important volume for us who tie.

The introduction by R.J.W. Coleby is excellent, for it both respects Mr. Kelson's work and does not try to hide the domineering, bullying nature of the man who may will be the most important figure in [Atlantic Salmon] flyfishing and its literature. Born in 1835, George Mortimer Kelson grew up in a privileged family with a medical background and a high expectancy of performance. Coleby says, "He seemed born to comepete." He excelled at Cricket, distance swimming and Steeplechase. Once he said, "I have passed my life amidst amusements of many kinds." Then he discovered fishing. During his seventy years of pursuing salmon, he caught an estimated three to four thousand. In one average season on the Usk, he caught 92. From an early age he wrote about fishing, first for The Fishing Gazette and, towards the end of his career, for Land and Water. His articles appeared weekly or bi-weekly and were accompanied by precise drawings of the flies he collected, codified or originated. They were reproduced b yy then state-

of-the-art printing methods, at first in black and white and eventually in color. It is from the color cards that were printed and sold separately by the magazine that Coleby has put together his excellent book.

In The Salmon Fly, Mr. Kelson inspires us to tie the complex flies whose style he largely originated and promoted. at the same time, he confuses us. For a hundred years now, anglers have read his instructions for mixedwinged salmon flies - the ones he called "skins." he said they were easy to tie. (Yes, easy for Leonardo!) Those of us who have had trouble marrying and setting ordinary salmon fly wings have studied the illustrations and reread his instructions with wonder and dismay. The winging can be done but it requires much practice and the best materials available.

Yesterday's flies have wings of married strips of dyed swan; today's utilize colored goose shoulder instead, which, when pro erly selected and matched to the same size and shape feather from other birds, marry nicely. Speaking of marrying nicely, Speckled Bustard is sometimes available legally, molted from birds kept in captivity, say, at a zoo. (When Kevin Snyder had these and I asked him how well they married, he replied, "You can marry them to a Volkswagen.").

Mr. Kelson tells you that one of his wings will marry with a few strokes of the fingers. Well, maybe, but not for me. The trick is in learning to discover the natural curl in the feathers and learning how to select and match it to feathers from other, dissimilar birds. This can take years of frustration to master.

Once you get into the craft, books like Mr. Kelson's are a great help. They will show you what the fly ought to look like - at least conceptually, for these are but illustrations. For the real McCoy (no, I don't mean Mike, but he will do), you must turn to photographs. They are better at showing how today's tiers have solved the ancient problems of fly design and the ordering of materials, say, in a wing.

The art of tying the Atlantic Salmon Fly has undergone a recent renaissance. It epitomizes what can be done with feathers, fur and iron. We know it to be a rich, complicated, satisfying activity. It can occupy many a long winter's evening and extend well into the following morning.

What is so special about a Kelson skin? Other fulldressed salmon fly wings are comprised of fairly wide bands of different materials (most often dyed goose shoulder), all married together and given a nice hump or backward curl. His, instead, are comprised of only a single fiber or two from each material or color, but the slender bands are repeated over and over, until a full wing is produced. Thus, a typical wing might consist of fibers of goose shoulder in red, blue and yellow; speckled bustard; peacock wing; golden pheasant tail and turkey. If you tie such a wing with single fibers of each, it won't be nearly wide enough to comprise the full height of a salmon fly wing, so you repeat the process. You start a second set of single fibers in exactly the same order as before, but the wing still isn't bulky enough. So you do it again, and most likely, again. When you have four or five such units married together, they will comprise a full wing. One wing. You will need two, of course, one for the other side of the fly, which is the mirror image of the first. So you begin your intricate construction again.

The shape of the wing is most important and most Kelson skins I've seen do not fit the template of the drawings that accompany the text in both his books. Mr. Kelson would not have permitted inaccuracies of the smallest detail, so we must assume the wings are exactly the way he wanted them tied. Smaller individual fibers are used for the lower portions and, as the built wing progresses toward the top of the fly, they get longer.

The wing is then "humped" for curvature. I've often thought that the way this is done is the signature of a tier and is as distinct as fingerprints. (How easy is it to spot a Ron Alcott fly, for instance?!) Humping is done with the fully married wing extended horizontally and the same fingers of both bands inducing a curve in the wing's shape that will be duplicated on both sides of the fly and follow the flow of the body back to the tail, but not much beyond it.

But let Mr. Kelson speak for himself: "As the pioneer of this system, perhaps I may say without egotism that, amidst the many changes which have occurred of late years, not only in the formation, but in the method of making certain flies, 'mixed wings' ... have met with the greatest approval and success. I personally worked out this style of winging, and made it generally known among my immediate friends on finding how well it answered in actual use." p.93. But then he improved upon it in the succeeding years and "has reduced the whole business will within the management of a beginner at work. [Italics his.] You can get the flavor of his personality in his writing style, I think.

And on the method itself: "Humping is a scheme by which a superb shape of wing is secured - a good curve given to the upper fibers, whilst the lower ones run almost parallel with the shank of the hook and close to it. The 'hump' is produced by holding the wings with a good grip of the fore-fingers and thumbs - those of the left hand gripping just on the head side of the middle part of the feathers; those of the right hand, close to their tying point. The wrists, at first elevate tot he top of the dotted curve in the diagram, are now slowly depressed, and the fore-fingers and thumbs of the respective hands, at first touching each other at the side edges of their nails, draw wider and wider from each other, as if hinged at their extreme points. p.97.

I have yet to see a wing shaped as in his illustrations. Instead, the wing fills the curve of the golden pheasant topping and forms a perfect ellipse with the tail.

When you try to duplicate it, you will feel Mr. Kelson's mind taking over yours, your fingers and your wrists. Try it. Dead since 1920, at the advanced age of 93, he returns not only to haunt, but to help you. His words prove good and useful. If you give him your mind, you will soon be tying skins just as he wants you to. Of course, you will not be good for anything else.

At the Three Salmons Hotel on the River Usk, in Wales, the greatest of the great used to gather for a day or two of fishing. Wales was considered to be England, and the river, the best around for salmon in numbers. Among the great angling writers who traveled there for the annual slaughter were Francis Francis, (A Book on Angling, 1867), Sir Herbert. Maxwell, (Salmon and Sea Trout, 1898), Dr. T.E. Pryce-Tannatt, (How to Dress Salmon Flies, 1914) and, of course, Mr. Kelson.

A vise and a cabinet full of tying materials from which the fisher was supposed to promptly replace what he had used up was consequently filled to overflowing; it was available to everybody. They tied without a vise, for the most part. Think of the heaps of Bustard, Indian Crow, Toucan, Ibis, Jay, etc. The men ate, drank and talked as they tied flies. I suppose they exchanged lies with that blithe lack of challenge that Steelhead and Salmon fishers will show each other in public. That is, nobody screamed out, "Liar, Liar, Pants on Fire!"

Mr. Kelson dominated the gathering - whomever was present. He invariably caught the most fish and had answers for all the questions nobody had thought to ask. He waited for them like a Barracuda. An imposing figure, he is pictured in both books in a Derby hat, wearing a short woolen jacket that is the forerunner of today's fishing vest. He displays stocking foot waders with nailed brogues. He is bearded, his long mustaches neatly groomed and curved in sweeping bicycle handles.

He showed the others the right way to tie flies. They never forgot it. Dr. Pryce-Tannatt, the kid, listened closely. When it was time for his own book on flies, years later, the method of listing fly recipes was Mr. Kelson's, as were many of the dressings. There have been several Kelson resurgences and we are in the midst of one right now. All over the world, tiers are challenged by his methods and the complexity of the patterns that are his legacy. In my neck of the woods, the Pacific Northwest, live a growing number of men and women who could sit down at the table at Three Salmons Hotel and show the famous fishers a thing or two with feathers and thread. Among them are Steve Gobin, Mike McCoy, Greg Hunt, Kevin Perkins and John Olshewsky. They are members of the Salmon Fly Guild, a unique group, where tiers in a field famous for its secrecy willingly share tips and techniques - well, up to a point, that is. If you share, you learn, and may pick up some tricks that will lift your craft to another level.

I search my own experience for something like those marvelous evenings at that hotel on the Usk. I recall many good times spent sharing a meal and a bottle with other fishers, some of them writers. I recall the big spaghetti feast put on by Trey Combs and B.J. Meigs at Clark's on the Skagit. The season closed on some exceptional spring fishing. We gathered in relief. Among those present were Harry Lemire, Jerry Wintle, Walt Johnson, Jim Vincent, Don Roberts, Alec Jackson, Joe Butorac, Les Johnson and Mike Kinney, plus wives and live-ins. All are first-rate tiers and fishers.

That was a heady collection of talent, all right, but it did not come close to equaling one evening at the Three Salmons Hotel in Usk, where Mr. Kelson drank and dined... alone.

Note: This is an author-abridgement of an article that appeared originally in the Volume One, Number Four issue of Steelhead Fly Fishing Journal, December, 1994.

CHALLENGE

Absolutely amazing! Thanks to everyone who submitted a fly for October's Challenge. Such variety and creativity among these flies. Thanks to Nick Fionovich for providing the pattern and Mark Kirchner for all his photography, layout and color copy work. The background for this issue's challenge is Suminagashi, a Japanese form of paper marbling, hand-done by Mark. Very succulent!

SPEYS, DEES & MORE, OH MY! PART II

Dave Paris

When we last left our superheros, (whoops, wrong story.) So, you've come to finish what we started last time and hear another opinion about how to mount Spey and Dee wings. How very kind of you! This may clear up the headache for some of you and for others; it could get you on the road to new and exciting adventures.

If we look to history for the lessons, we find both Kelson and Pryce-Tannatt very helpful. Kelson offers superb techniques for winging Dee flies (although his Spey wings are more adapted to fishing, not exhibition dress) and Pryce-Tannatt is helpful in both departments. Let's look into each wing type separately.

Spey wings; nothing lies as low, caps a body or makes a fly look as sleek as a well applied, exhibition style, Bronze Mallard wing. By exhibition style, I am referring to the very low, nothing showing on top of the shank, any lower and the wing is under the fly kind of look. Traditionally, according to Kelson, the

Spey wing was actually reverse tied and sat rather vertical to give more play in the current. This does nothing for my sense of style. Now, Bob Veverka, Syd Glasso or Steve Gobin, these guys, to me, have more panache than any ten mortals put together should have. The secret to wings this low lies in two places. The first is the tie in point on Bronze Mallard and the second is just how much of the shank these take up.

Bronze Mallard, when used properly, can virtually mount itself onto a hook When used improperly, it can increase your more colorful vocabulary multi-fold. As you look at the Bronze Mallard flank feather, you'll notice that each fiber has many more barbules (fluff) in the gray base area and that the closer you get to the quill the denser this becomes. This is the magic tie-in zone. Ideally, you'll strip the fibers off the quill (never, ever, cut the fibers or you'll put your knee out of joint kicking yourself in the tush for doing this) to retain the thin, continuous filament strip at the base of the fibers. This strip keeps the fibers together during the tying process. The object of the game is to select a feather that has just enough length in the fiber to allow you something less than 1/8" of fluff to the eye side of the tie-in point. If you've properly selected your feather and you pay attention to the next point; when next you try tying a Spey, you should be quite amazed.

Bronze Mallard doesn't like to be squashed and mangled, so part of the trick lies in spreading it out around the shank. Look at Figure 1 and you'll see what I mean. This wrapping effect automatically gives you the sleek appearance and covers the top of the throat hackle.

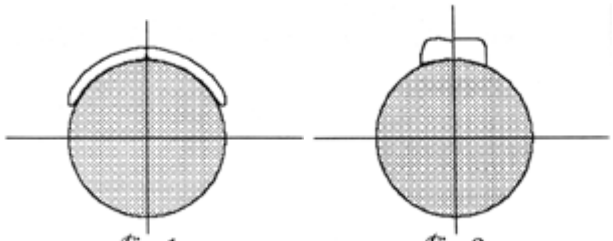


Fig. 1 *Fig. 2*

The second topic of our little chat today tackles that ever-troublesome matter of mounting Dee wings. Ali yes, slim, sleek, simple strips of Turkey and other large fibered birds that are either partially or wholly responsible for the development of Rogaine. Actually, I think only partially responsible, since Topping Wings must also be a guilty party, but that's a topic for another article (nudge, nudge).

Similar to Bronze Mallard, all attention must be paid to the tiein point, placement and covering of the shank and material selection. First, select a feather that has fibers less than 1/4" longer than you'll need and split the quill in half. Do not (for fear of your knees again) cut the fibers from the quill. Select a slip of fibers just a hair narrower than you think would look really nice and cut this slip out of the quill. Now, shave the quill until just the littlest bit is holding these fibers together. Kelson recommended this highly. I believe it reduces the stress between fibers when you're tying the slip in. Once you've gotten this far, go fix yourself a nice relaxing beverage (personally, Bombay Sapphire over ice, two almond stuffed olives marinated in extra dry vermouth, thank you very much).

Now, before you go tying this whole mess onto the iron, let's examine the where and why of the whole thing. First, look at Figure 2. The strips are just as on top of the hook as they can get. This allows for fiber compression (think of it as a married wing set flat and you really want this thing to lay in the same plane as the shank) and flatness of the strip. The trick to setting these strips so high on the shank lies in the techniques of Kelson. For the far wing (right handed, that is), you want a strip from the left side of the quill and prepare as described above. Then using the thumb and forefinger of the right hand, nick the tie in point using the pad of your thumb and the nail of your finger. This will pre-compress the strip in the desired lateral direction. Use your left hand to then do the near strip. Then, after taking a couple of close wraps, use the bit of quill still attached and steer the strip into its proper place. See your handy copy of Pryce-Tannatt for the correct 'VI orientation between the two strips. One final note, you may find it necessary to reverse the thread to do one of the strips. Well, we all have our little frogs to kiss, maybe yours will be a shining prince!

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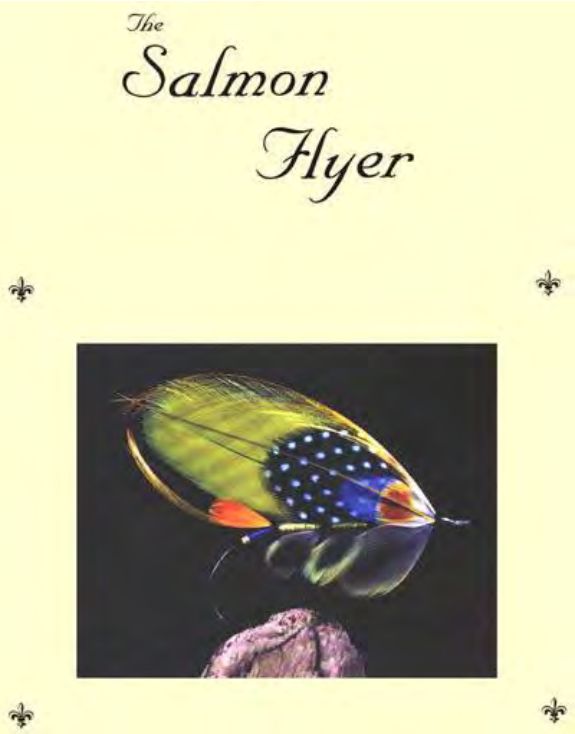
Vol. 7 - No. 2, Spring, 1995



PHANTOMS . . . COME TO LIFE . . . PLEASE

John Betts

In the October '95 issue of The Salmon Flyer there are examples of what is apparently the work of William Blacker. A few weeks after this appeared, the Flyfisher's Classic Library reprint arrived. Two fairly quick readings of Mr. Pott's article and Mr. Blacker's book did little to substantiate what seems to be the common wisdom surrounding William Blacker, his work and his book. Quite to the contrary, there may be areas, which if looked at, could readjust his position in the landscape of fly dressing.

My only evidence of Mr. Blacker's work, an assumption on my part as well as that of Mr. Potts and his guide (?), are three flies on page seven of our quarterly.

The first fly, which one may say is complete, as it has a finished head, carries a mixed wing composed of an undecipherable arrangement of fibers. This may be due to the reproduction and not the photographer or Mr. Blacker; even with all of this accounted for, it appears to be an amateurish effort. I have had the privilege of seeing Michael Rogan's flies, tied, presumably, before Mr. Blacker. His wings, though mixed, are definitely organized, and created on purpose. The hackle on this fly, as well as the one below it, are typical of the Irish style, which is as it should be. They are well mounted, particularly on the middle fly, but no more so than what could be expected from an experienced tier. The significant change in Irish style can be seen when comparing the Irish flies in Pryce-Tannatt to those of Frankie McPhillips in E.B. Malone's Irish Trout and Salmon Flies (FFCL 1993).

The second fly is winged with bronze mallard in a manner that a beginner would try just once in a beginning class. Maybe the feather was just tacked on, unprepared, to show where it should be tied in. In none of the plates or instructions in the FFCL edition is anything like this depicted or discussed.

The third fly has a tip to tag step up over the tailing that helped introduce, and make popular, the accepted custom of a butt of herl or wool. Tied with care, there is no need for a butt that would convert it from a necessity to an addition.

None of these flies display the craftsmanship that Mr. Blacker has received acclaim for, either during his life or afterward. Is it possible that these are not, or not entirely, his flies, but those of a student from his

classes that filled this, the student's copy of the book, with what had been done in class? Perhaps Mr. Potts could elucidate here - for example, which edition did these appear in? Where in the text were the flies? Were there any notes in the margin, and if so, in whose hand?

Even I, ranking at the bottom of our group in terms of craftsmanship, can and have produce better flies than this without a vise, which is how Mr. Blacker tied. My sense is that Mr. Potts has complimented flies that would have not received accolade had they not been said to be the work of William Blacker.

Turing to The Art of Fly Making, there are similar problems with what has been broadcast and what is present. To come from a different direction may highlight some of the inconsistencies to set them in higher relief. Who was William Blacker? Where did he come from, and who were his associates?

Not a great deal is known about him, beyond that he was Irish; according to Mr. McKenna, Blacker liven in Scotland, ended up in the tackle business in London and died of tuberculosis at the age of 43. There is nothing that emerges clearly as a singular driving force in his life. It is doubtful that he had a first rate education, unlike some of his customers, one of whom was unusual and could have written a good deal of The Art of Fly making. This customer was a friend of English royalty and the highest peerage in the land. He was then, and is still recognized as a significant writer in the area of fly fishing. His pen name was Ephemera, in life he was Edward Fitzgibbon. Mr. Fitzgibbon was also present at Mr. Blacker's death and singed the certificate.

Although I have no doubt that Mr. Blacker authored the core of the fly tying text, and may have also done something with the travel section, I am not convinced that the volume we see now, is, in the main, his work. At the very least, there seems to be two different styles of writing. One straight forward, the other much more in keeping with what one might expect from a man of letters. They are so intertwined that pulling them apart would sunder the text. There are glimpses though, that in the reading are not that hard to find. Style is, at its strongest, a nebulous and abstract reason to look at what, in effect, is a text book. Perhaps we can find something more concrete.

Both James Ogden and P.D. Malloch wrote and probably produced what they did, in the way they did it, for reasons similar to those of William Blacker. Someone like a book publisher or a person on the staff of a periodical, like Mr. Fitzgibbon, may have said, "You ought to write a book on this. It would certainly help your business, and I'd be glad to publish it." Exactly the same thing that goes on today. Both Mr. Ogden and Mr. Malloch, men of wide angling and tying experience, had high professional profiles and tackle businesses. Neither however, were men of writing ability equal to their elevated status as fly fishermen, and consequently produced the bare bones works they left behind. Mr. Ogden was probably encouraged to "flesh" out his piece, and did just that by candidly praising both himself; what he had accomplished, and what products of his were available. Mr. Malloch's work consisted of magazine articles. Both men did little more than indicate that they were anglers and proprietors first and writers some distance behind that. Mr. Blacker may not have been any different from them, or shop owners today. Immediately, I can only think of two or three that write regularly. Had Mr. Blacker worked throughout the editions o on his own, what kind of book would he have produced? I suggest that it would have been more in keeping with Ogden on Fly Tying. Indeed, the first copy of The Art is supposed to have been only 31 pages.

Enter Mr. Fitzgibbon to contribute as he had cone previously through his editing of William Shipley's book in 1838. This book is quite good, as Mr. Shipley apparently could write, it did not suffer from the extra hand either in content or financial return.

In his time, Mr. Blacker may well have been the best fly dresser in London. The Rogan studio was operating, but it was in Ireland, and times there were very difficult. Had Mr. Blacker lacked in skill, he may have more than made up for it by being convenient. However he did his work, he was successful and well known even with competition nearby in the person of Mr. Jones of Jones' Guide to Norway. Even though Messers Jones and Tolfrey were outright liars (I have driven the E 16, one of their routes in Norway, several times, in both directions. Neither could have written what they did, had they travelled it, which neither ever did, and yet they use the word "we" in their collaboration). Mr. Jones had an excellent business selling high quality tackle to wealthy Englishmen. Mr. Fitzgibbon certainly knew of Mr. Jones, but did not lend him the kind of support he gave to Mr. Blacker. He might have made his choice because of a difference in the characters of Mr. Jones and Mr. Blacker, but that is pure speculation. Was Mr. Fitzgibbon, in the vernacular, a "groupie", attaching himself to whomever he thought was, or could be, important? He wasn't the least bit shy about throwing his social weight and who he knew around. At first, I thought this to be the case, now though, I'm not so sure. While wanting

to be on the inside track may have played a part, he may also have genuinely wanted to contribute to the advancement of someone he felt had promise and something to offer in an area he loved - that of fly fishing. Patronage of all sorts was a common practice, something the "right sort of people" were expected to do. It is still so today, eg. Mr. Kreh or Mr. Whitlock writing a forward to someone else's book.

With Mr. Blacker, he went to work on the text recently selected by the FFCL for re-issue. It was the last edition done during Mr. Blacker's lifetime; Mr. Fitzgibbon was to die a year later. Did he help or harm the basic thrust of the book? Without having seen earlier efforts, it's hard to say. My guess is that he complicated something quite simple when one considers the author's background and original manuscript. In pieces like this, the gravest error commonly committed is that of the omission of an instruction. However, there is no question that someone (Mr. Fitzgibbon?) helped dress up the first editions, making both it and Mr. Blacker more marketable. This is not a small contribution in any field, let alone that of fly fishing in the mid 1800's. If one weeds carefully through the text, the directions are easy to follow. They are sound, solid advise; it's the weeding process that can be tedious. For example, there are steps for a fly upon which the hackle and wing are set before the tail and body are applied. This may be nothing more than residual technique, unquestioned by either Mr. Blacker or Mr. Fitzgibbon. The technique is from a time when most flies were finished at the tail, as it was easier to half hitch here rather than at the other end where the hitch loop could slip off, at a critical moment, onto the snell. This practice of finishing at the tail had nearly died out, for good reason, by this time but it is included in Mr. Shipley's book, published only three years before Mr. Blacker's first edition.

Part of the weeding process should include a look at the plates. To begin, there are at least three different engravers, with the plate under "The Picker" appearing to be the oldest; then perhaps the fuzzy impressions, but better hook shapes without borders and finally plates with borders, demonstrating first-rate engraving, coloring and impression. Also, it becomes apparent that there is more than one colorist and plate designer. It is comforting to see that the hooks in the photographs in The Salmon Flyer look a good deal like those in The Art of Fly Making. For the most part, people accurately drew what they saw, as in Mr. Hofland's flies and landscapes and Mr. Ronald's insects and flies. Even the hooks in the "Picker" plate look a good bit like Irish hooks from the early 19th and late 18th centuries.

The plate of the feathers is unfinished. The large dark hackle in the center has been underpainted, but only half of it has been overglazed and this leads to an interesting speculation. How many plates were printed? How many of these were colored? Correctly? Incorrectly? How many were rejected? How many were never completed? According to Mr. McKenna, the book was still available as new (?) in the early 1890's. Thirty-five years after the deaths of Mr. Blacker and Mr. Fitzgibbon. Were more "1855 editions" bound after 1855 using what was left over?

The comments about the confusing instructions in the 1855 text are simplistic. If William Blacker was only half of the tier he was reputed to be, we should know more about him. His extended body, comments on his finger nails and how to use them and reversing the fly could only have come from a person of considerable talent, whose greatest deficiency was a lack of training that would have enabled him to write it down on his own. Because of his ability, it seems doubtful that he would leave behind, pasted in a book, examples of his work like that shown in the photographs. I doubt if he sent anything like that to Prince Albert, and if he is like any other tier, he would not want a record like that for prosperity. He may have been around when these flies were tied, he may have even tied all or part of them, but I doubt that they even begin to represent what he could do. And for that reason, it seems unlikely, to me, that they are his work.

Apparently there is someone (in the U.K.) who has collected a considerable amount of The Art of Fly Making. Does anyone know who they are? They could help a lot!

BOOK REVIEW

J. P. Harrang

In his latest work, flytying "blackbelt" Ken Sawada has written a book that describes the intricacies of dressing classic patterns, as well as several of his own beautiful creations. Many aspects of Classic Salmon Fly Dressing are wonderful, but in some ways, it could stand improvement. Having not personally seen his first book titled Art of the Classic Salmon Fly (1990), I can make no comparison

between the two except in terms of cost. This new book, which is priced at $165.00 (U.S.), is not cheap by any means, but is a relative bargain compared to his first book that retailed for $400.00 (U.S.)

The photography in Classic Salmon Fly Dressing is a mixed bag. The full color close-up shot of various fly tying procedures and the close-ups of his own patterns are absolutely stunning. If you liked the pictures of his flies in Judith Dunham's The Atlantic Salmon Fly, then you'll love this! Unfortunately, the double page photographs, displaying dozens of classic flies and his contemporary patterns, are small and slightly blurry in places. I think it would have been much better to add a few additional pages so that the flies could be spaced out and enlarged a bit rather than looking like the fly layouts found in a low-grade flyfishing catalog.

The step-by-step fly dressing instructions found in Classic Salmon Fly Dressing are not for the beginner. Phrases such as "Step 1: Tie on tag, tail and rear half of body" are common. For the experienced tier, this poses no problem, but I would advise any neophytes in the crowd who attempt to tie from this book to first consult Poul Jorgensen's famed text Salmon Flies: Their Character, Style and Dressing, or better yet, spend some time with an experienced fly dresser. I found the diagrams, photos and accompanying instructions for tying Mr. Sawada's original patterns, such as his "Unmarried Angel" to be very insightful. His techniques for creating beautiful color gradation in married wings, as in "Daybreak" and the manner in which he mounts his very high wings were new to me. Studying Classic Salmon Fly Dressiniz has allowed me to incorporate a number of neat tying tricks into my ever-growing repitoire and has inspired me to create several beautiful patterns of my own.

One thing I really liked about this work was that Ken Sawada included both photographs and dressings for 62 of his own patterns. Contrast this with his first book which included only 42 of his original patterns and, as far as I know, no dressings or tying instructions whatsoever. Also listed are nearly 500 classic patterns from Blacker, Kelson, Rogan, Pryce-Tannatt, Francis Francis, Ephemera, etc. In this respect, I feel Classic Salmon Fly Dressing is worth every dime. It is a true compendium of dressings from many of the great masters of Salmon Fly tying, a one-stop shopping center for patterns, if you will. However, it should be noted that different versions of classic patterns are not cross-referenced between tiers in this book as they are in Mikael Frodin's Classic Salmon Flies. Mr. Sawada even lists the dressings from Blacker's Art of Flymaking in a "translated" manner, making it easier for modern tiers to interpret how those flies should be properly dressed.

Oh, speaking of translations brings me to another point, perhaps one of my biggest complaints about the book. Classic Salmon Fly Dressing contains text in both Japanese and English. I can't read Japanese, but I will say that the English portion of the book is, in places, truly a linguistic disaster. There have been several occasions when I've had to suppress the urge to break out my red pen and start correcting spelling and grammar mistakes. You may think that perhaps I'm being a little too hard on Mr. Sawada (I studied enough German in college to understand how difficult it can be to communicate in another language). It's just that if I'm going to cough up $165.00 for a book, I feel that it should be easy to read and free of errors. In this modern age of computers with spell checkers (and translation programs, ed.) and an ever-increasing number of completely bilingual individuals, such blatant mistakes are hard to forgive. Perhaps he had to meet some sort of publishing deadline?

There are two primary schools of thought as concerns Salmon Flies. The first group of tiers feel that there are already more than enough patterns in existence and that no more need (or should) be created. In other words, focus on the classics. The second group enjoys developing new patterns as a form of artistic expression, as an outlet for their creative juices, or simply as a pleasant and relaxing way to spend a cold and stormy winter evening. Therein lies the beauty of Ken Sawada's Classic Salmon Fly Dressing; there's something in it for everyone! Despite its minor flaws, it is, as a whole, an excellent book. I would recommend it to anyone who is serious about dressing Featherwing Salmon Flies. Two thumbs up!

CHALLENGE

J. P. Harrang

Kelson's Black Dog is a most unusual classic Salmon Fly pattern. The long, flowing Heron, the body construction and the hackle tips used as an underwing all come together nicely in this fly. For this month's challenge, I slightly modified the form of the Black Dog and dramatically altered the color scheme.

Purple is a color so popular for Steelhead in the Pacific Northwest, but it is not an overly common color when it comes to Salmon Flies. There are, however, exceptions to this, such as the Purple Emperor.

In designing this fly, I wanted to create a nice looking pattern that used no hard-to-find materials like Bustard, Indian Crow, etc. Here are some notes on substitutes needed to dress this fly...

Scarlet Ibis Sub. - African Grey Parrot tail feathers work very well, as does Swan or Goose dyed a pinkish red (or a light, rich Scarlet, ed.) The Scarlet ibis is in the C.I.T.I.E.S. list, but African Grey's are somewhat more common in Aviculture.

Black Heron Sub. - Of course, nothing is as good as real Heron, but this is also unavailable for the most part (and keeping with the charter of the magazine, we don't advise using it!, ed.) Subs include Bob Borden's Spey Hackle (although I don't recommend it, J.P.H.), bleached and dyed pheasant rump feathers, Elder Duck Feathers or, with a little work, the crests from a Silver Pheasant. You can even bleach and dye Blue-Eared Pheasant if you like.

Chatterer Sub - Kingfisher is the best I know of, but now that these can no longer be imported, they are getting scarce. If you do not have Kingfisher, webby hen hackles dyed bright blue or the white ring feathers from a Ringneck Pheasant in the same colors are acceptable. Also, some parrot, lovebirds, lorikeets and the like have small blue feathers which can be used in place of Chatterer. Hang out at your local pet store... you may be pleasantly surprised!

THE PURPLE DOG

Tag: Oval Silver Tinsel & Golden Yellow Floss
Tail: Golden Pheasant Crest & Scarlet Ibis Sub
Butt: Black Ostrich Herl
Body: Purple Floss
Ribs: Red Floss between two ribs of Oval Gold Tinsel
Hackle: Black Heron Sub, from 3rd Turn
Throat: Black & White Speckled Guinea
Underwing: Jungle Fowl, back to back, enveloping two red dyed hackle tips, also back to back.
Main Wing: Yellow, Red & Blue Goose or Swan, Amherst Pheasant Tail, Golden Pheasant Tail
Topping: Golden Pheasant Crest
Cheeks: Blue Chatterer Sub.
Horns: Blue & Yellow Macaw
Head: Black

A BASIC MATERIALS LIST FOR FEATHERWING ATLANTIC SALMON FLIES

Jeff D. Welker

Dubbing (Bodies): Course texture Seal, Mohair or SLF Fiery brown, Dk. Blue, Yellow, Black, Orange, Claret, Lt. Blue, Green Highlander

Floss (Bodies):Single strand Silk, Rayon or Nylon Yellow, Lemon Yellow, Golden Yellow, Black, Claret, Pale blue, Scarlet, Orange

Saddles (Body Hackles): 5"-6" Stem Length with rapid barb taper & fine quill Blue, Yellow, Orange, Red, Black, Claret

Tinsels (Butts, Bodies & Ribs): Mostly Silver, Occasionally Gold & Rarely Copper Flat: 14, 16, 18ga Tinsel (twist): 18, 20, 22ga Oval: 14, 16, 18ga

Golden Pheasant Crests (Tails & Toppings)

Golden Pheasant Tippets (Underwing & Body Veilings)

Mottled Turkey Tails (Built/Mixed Wings & Speckled Substitute) Min. 2"- 2 1/4 " barb length

Dyed Turkey Tails or Goose Shoulders (Built/Mixed Wings): Min. 2"- 2 1/4 " barb length Yellow, Blue, Red, Orange, Green, Claret, Black

Peacock Secondary Wing Quills (Built/Mixed Wings & Underwings) Min. 2"- 2X" barb length

Argus or Golden Pheasant Tail Quills (Matched Sides or Centers): Min. 2"- 2 1/2" barb length

Brown/Bronze Mallard Feathers (Built/Mixed Wings & Roofs)

Pintail or Teal Feathers ("Married" Shoulders or Sides)

Barred Woodduck Feathers ("Married" Shoulders, Sides and Tails)

Dyed Ringneck Pheasant (Tail/-Body Veilings & Cheeks; Indian Crow Substitute)

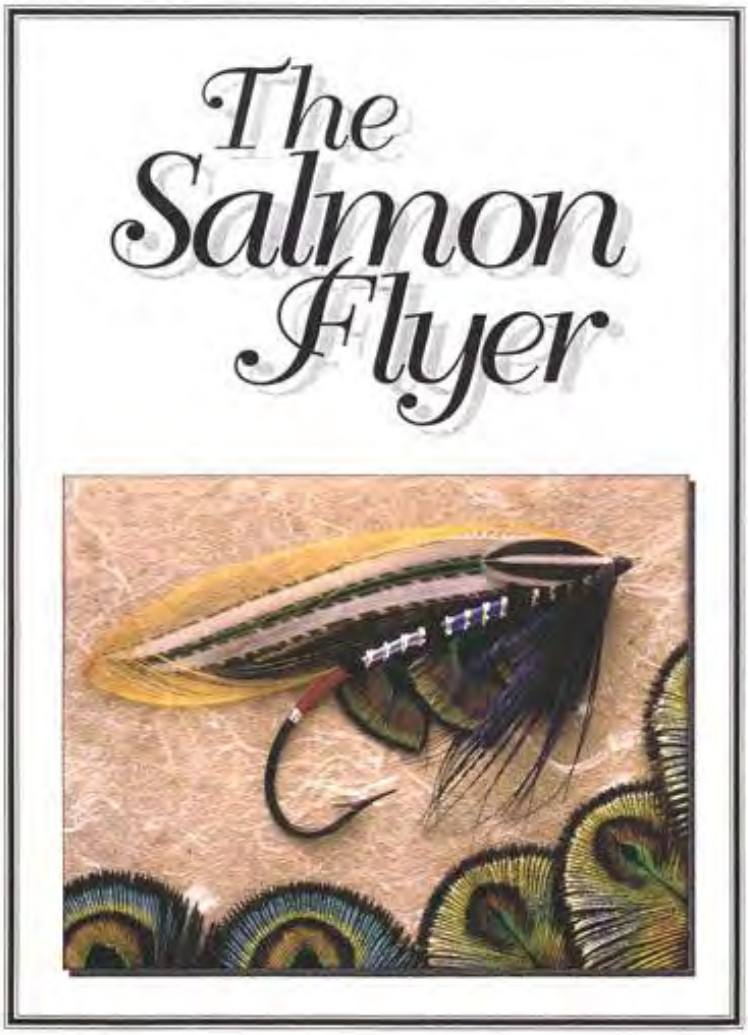
Kingfisher Feathers (Tail/Body Veilings & Cheeks; Blue Chatterer Substitute)

Jungle Cock Feathers (Sides & Wings): Top grade neck or single "nails"

Blue & Gold Macaw Tail Feathers (Horns): Matched side or center tails

Ostrich Herl (Very short fibers, for Butts): Black, Yellow, Red, Green, Claret

Thread (6/0): Black, Yellow, Red, Green, Claret, White

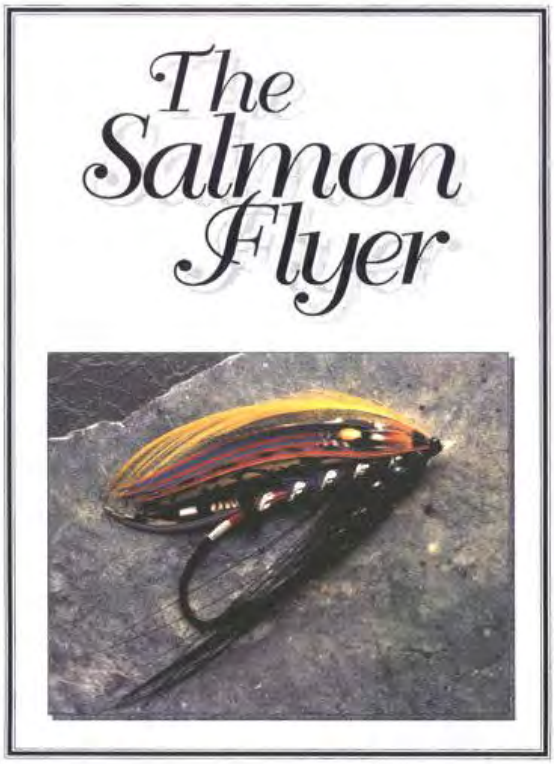


ON THE COVER

Peacock's Pride

Designed and dressed by Mike Radencich

Tag: Silver tinsel and scarlet silk.
Tail: A topping.
Butt: Back Ostrich herl.
Body: In three equal sections of light, medium and dark blue silk. each section is veiled below only with pairs of Java Peacock "scale" feathers back to back (With each pair getting larger toward the head) and butted with black Ostrich, herl.
Ribs: Four turns over each section with fine oval silver tinsel followed by fine silver lace.
Throat: Blue Peacock breast feather.
Wings: Underwing of Java Peacock herl. Main wing of white, green and black dyed turkey and Bustard. Pintail above and a topping over all.
Cheeks: Jungle cock hackle feathers.
Head: Black.



Captain Walton

Dressed by Duane L. Dotts

Tag: Silver tinsel, cream silk and crimson silk.
Tail: Scarlet ibis, powder blue Macaw, Peacock wing and tippet with two shorter strips of Summer Duck.
Butt: Black Ostrich herl.
Body: Crimson silk, dark blue seal's fur and black seal's fur in equal sections.
Ribs: Flat silver tinsel and silver lace.
Hackle: Black Heron, from seal's fur.
Throat: Kenya crested guinea fowl.
Wings: Peacock wing dyed claret, powder blue Macaw, red Macaw and Golden pheasant tail with married strips of mallard and gallina above and a topping over all.
Sides: Teal.
Cheeks: Jungle cock and Indian crow.
Head: Black.

SALMON FLIES ... BASIC REQUIREMENTS AND TECHNIQUE

Jack Madden

THE NIFTY SPECIAL

(This fly was designed to teach the basics as is named for the FFF club I support)

Tag: 3-4 Turns x-fine oval tinsel and yellow floss
Tail: Topping and Kingfisher veiling
Butt: Black Ostrich herl
Rib: Medium oval tinsel
Throat: Guinea
Underwing: Tippets (back to back)
Wing: Peacock, yellow, red, orange, blue dyed strips, & Golden Pheasant tail
Sides: Barred Wood Duck

Cheeks: Kingfisher
Topping: Golden Pheasant Crest
Horns: Blue and Gold Macaw
Head: Black

This brief paper is written in an effort to enable the beginning salmon fly tier to get into this pastime with a minimum of problems. It is not intended to be scholarly, of ultimate technical level, original, or even totally accurate. It is information that I have used with beginners that has been successful in terms of technique and concepts. It is offered with a sense of sharing and with modesty, knowing, full well, that my own journey has just begun.

Hstorically, gaudy flies (as designed and favored by the Irish and despised by the Scots) came into existence in the mid 1800's. About 50 years later the Scots gave in and a great blossoming of patterns took place. The composition of these flies was then made possible by a combination of British expansionism and the millinery trends and trade making colorful and exotic feathers available from every corner of the world. Although they were later replaced by hair winged flies because of their greater movement and translucency in water, a great deal of the spirit of the Atlantic salmon fly lives on today for many of us who remain in awe of their beauty and challenge.

If you would like to tie these flies I feel that the best preparation would be first to read the available literature, look at the great variety of style and character given these flies by both historic and modern tiers, and then begin your tying with your own concept of what these flies can be. Books to read include T.E. Pryce Tannatt, Kelson, Hale, Bates, Sawada, Frodin, and Dunham. You can also get ideas and information from catalogs and by photographing your work and trading with others. One of the best things you can do is subscribe to and read "The Salmon Flyer' and, most important participate in the group. Through it you can learn history, technique, sources, styles, and begin to meet others who tie these flies and start in the great sharing process that is so beneficial.

As you begin to read and see photographs of the classic flies u will note that, in many cases, the "recipe' given for a fly is very different from the fly as pictured. Typically, the color sequence for a wing is assumed to be from the bottom up but you will note that the tiers of the past, as well as current tiers, take great freedom in how they assemble the components. It is important for you to keep in mind that it's your fly and it's your choice, that beauty is in the eye of the beholder, and that the more you see, know, and create, the more you will begin to have your own preferences, develop your own goals, and know what is apt to please you when you tie.

BEGINNING - Start your fly with wing and tail. These two components are the two most critical in determining the end product and should be considered first. The easiest way to begin shaping our fly before you start tying is by making a sketch of the basic shapes (hook, tail, wing, and topping) you want to achieve. You can use a copier to get an outline of the exact size and shape of the hook you will use and draw the pattern over it. You can also use that paper for notes.

MATERIALS FOR WINGS Should:

1) Marry well from butt to tip.

2 Have sufficient length.

3) Have bright colors.

You will want to have turkey, goose, or swan that has been dyed red, yellow, orange, blue, and green. You wall also want turkey in cinnamon, speckled, & gray. Peacock shoulders and Golden pheasant center tails are also commonly called for with the latter being the most difficult to acquire because they do not often marry out to the tips of the barbs.

MARRYING - Hold a feather by the quill with the good (convex) side facing you. Barbs from the left side of feathers will constitute the right, or near wing and those from the right side will form the left, far, wing. Please note that, in most instances, you will need to use a pair of feathers to make up your wings because barbs on one side of the feather may be too short. A dubbing needle may be used to both count and separate the number of barbs you want to use before you cut them off. As you cut these slips of feather be careful to keep the lefts separate from the rights or you will have problems assembling the wing. I build the right wing first starting at the bottom and working toward the top extending each "slip" of

feather about 1/64th of an inch past the preceding slip. On the near wing the concave side should face away from you (tips to the left). I do the left wing in the same way but with the concave side facing me. If you use the same number of barbs for each color, the wings will be of equal width.

MATCHING - After wings are completed, hold them over the outline of the hook and shape (hump) to taste. At this point, select and shape the tail to match up to the wing. Do all of this on your paper and you can reduce your chances of "surprises".

TAILS Desirable qualities.

1) Good barb count

2) Correct length.

3 Good color that matches topping.

4) Good shape.

Select your tails so that you will tie in on the pulpy part and remember that it will be part of the base for your butt.

TAILS & TOPPINGS - When you get a good crest, pluck the feathers you may use as tails and toppings and put them in a bowl of warm water and woolite, leave overnight, and then rinse several times. When dumping the wash or rinse water you can use a strainer but be careful because these small wet feathers can go right through. Best bet is to use your fingers to get them out after pouring off some of the water. Then using a tweezers, pick up the feather at the butt and lay on a flat surface to dry with its natural curve. After drying sort out the best in size and color and shape for your show flies and put the rest in a container for fishing flies.

Choose feathers for tails and toppings that meet the size requirements for your fly and do further shaping as you see fit. If the shape is close you can "work it" the rest of the way. I often like to open up the curve a bit which shows more barbs and catches more light. Gene Sunday uses a hair drier and tweezers to shape and open up his toppings, Wayne Luallen uses his thumb nail, Paul Schmookler uses a steam iron, and Al Cohen looks for the feather that has the "just the right shape" naturally. Practice with some bad toppings and see what works best for you. Do not try to make a poor feather fit because it will probably never look right. When you have the feather shaped and measured, you can strip off the fluff, flatten the tie in point with pliers, and even shave some of the quill off with a scalpel or razor blade to further reduce the bulk at the tie inpoint. Do not prepare the tie in point, however, until you are ready to tie in. Remember, you want to accomplish the following:

a) Shape the topping to follow the wing and meet the tip of the tail so that they barely touch.

b) Have the topping center on the wing so that the barbs will drop on both sides of the wing.

c) Have the butt end of the topping match the hump at the front of the wing as well as flattened and shaved to avoid a bump when finishing the head.

CHEEKS & SIDES - If using a whole feather for a cheek, side, or tail veiling, you can make its installation a whole lot easier by gently stroking the unwanted portion toward the butt and applying a bit of vinyl cement to that portion and stroking and holding it once more to compact and flatten it. Once it is dry, you can flatten the tie in point and trim it by cutting off all that will not be tied in. If using a section of barred wood duck or combination of feather sections a neat way to prepare it is to tie it with an overhand knot around the slip of feather, hold the feather and knot between your thumb and forefinger, and gently draw it tight at the tie in point. I use thread on a bobbin and anchor the bobbin so that I can pull with just my right hand and hold the feather (and the knot) with my left. Then you can trim it as above and even put a tiny touch of cement there as well.

HORNS - Most patterns call for blue/gold macaw. Take one barb from each side of a center tail or from two side feathers making sure they will be long enough to go as far as the tip of the tail. More on this later.

TYING THE FLY - After you have done all the preliminary assembly and preparation procedures it is time to begin the assembly process of the fly.

Mounting the hook in the vise (after you have shaped it to your liking) is probably best done by cutting a small square of paper from a business card and folding it over that portion of the hook that will be held by the vise. This eliminates marring the finish of the hook. The hook shank should be level i.e. parallel to the tabletop.

If you are using a blind eyed hook, now is the time to tie in the gut. There are several ways to do this. The most widespread method is that described in Pryce-Tannatt. The way I do it is to take three short sections of gut that have been well soaked, lay the ends on the far side of the hook, and tie them in with thread wraps moving forward to within a 16th" of the tip of the hook. I then twist the gut using a strong hackle pliers or hemostat and then loop it around a heavy needle or nail and tie it in with wraps moving toward the rear. After the gut is tied in I untwist, "shave", and manipulate it until it forms the shape I have chosen. Then, I whip finish the black thread and go to the next step.

I use primrose thread for the rear half of most flies because that portion is usually made up of lighter colored materials and the primrose is less visible than the black if it ever shows through. Some folks use white. You can use whatever you feel is appropriate but I suggest a light tone for the reason above. Start this light colored thread at the point where you have stop with the black thread after tying in the gut and work back toward the bend with smooth, even wraps remembering to untwist the thread regularly. When you get to the point on the hook when the thread plumb-lines" directly over the point of the hook, tie in the tinsel for the tag. Tie the tinsel on the underside of the hook and keep it in that position as you wrap back. When you get to a point where your thread "plumb-lines" over the point of the barb, take four wraps forward and wrajp forward with three or four wraps of tinsel or until you feel you have a wide enough band. Then tie off the tinsel so that it is pararrel and above that which is already bound to the hook and keep it in that position as you carefully wrap forward to the spot over the point of the hook.

Now tie in the floss. Loop the end over your thread and slide it up and under the thread on the far side of the hook. Tie the floss on with as many wraps of thread as you like but count the wraps. We count the wraps in this and some other proceedures because we then know just how many we can remove in our efforts to control unnecessary bulk in the construction. Gently stroke the floss down and away from the tie in point. Constant careful stroking will help give you a flat ribbon of floss that will result in a smooth tag. Wrap back until you reach the tinsel and then carefully reverse to wrap back to the tie in point. When you reach the tie m point, unwra the same number of thread wraps used to tie m the floss and then retie the floss with two even, flat wraps forward.

Tying in the tail is next. It is important to prepare a flat even base of about 1/16 of an inch located above the point of the hook otherwise, when you begin tying the butt, the herl will go off at strange angles and look open instead of dense. Lay the stem of your measured, shaped, and prepared tail at the tiein point and wrap four to six flat wraps forward. Now look at the tail to be sure it is mounted as you wish and, if not, take it off and do it as many times as necessary until it is right. Do not go any further until the tail is exactly the way you want it!

Once you have the tail mounted, take your prepared veiling and trim the tie-in point so that it fits the base you are creating. Now, catch the edge of the veiling and wrap back, holding it in place until you reach the left edge of the base. If the veiling doesn't look right, do it over. This goes for any part of your fly. Any problem at the early stages seems to get magnified later on. If you remember this one rule I know I will have helped you a lot.

In tying in the butt, prepare the ostrich herl by stripping the fuzz off the butt end of the herl. Then, tie it m with the quill edging forward and wrap the herl forward to the right edge of the base, trying to achieve a nice dense butt, and tie off with two wraps.

The next step is to tie in the tinsel for the ribbing. Leaving about an inch of tinsel to the right, pull the tinsel under the thread and against the lower, far side of the hook. Now, wrap your thread forward, keeping it as flat and as even as possible, and keeping the tag end of the tinsel in a fixed position and same direction against the hook. Wrap the thread to within a quarter inch of the eye and whip finish. Now tie in, again, with black thread and wrap back to the onethird point of the body. Tie in the floss as before and proceed with the body section in the same manner as the tag. Now dub the forward two thirds of the body as you would a shaggy nymph stopping about 3/16ths of an inch short of the eye. Here's another place to be extra careful. If you get too close to the eye things will become very difficult. Believe mel With your dubbing needle, "pick out" the dubbing on the lower half of the body to get a nice fuzzy look that will blend with the throat m a nice transition. Thin things out a bit just before the eye.

Now is the time to wrap the rib. Carefully space your wraps so that you get five wraps on the body, ember that you want the same angle on the back as well as the front of the fly. Tie off the rib on the underside of the fly and trim. Five wraps is believed by some to be traditional but you'll notice all sorts of variations as you read and see work by others.

In most books, the next step is to tie in the throat but this is where I like to tie m the underwin because it reduces the amount of material in the hear Take feathers from opposite sides of a golden pheasant neck and carefully place them back to back. Judge where you want the bars of the tippet feather to line up with the body and begin to reduce these feathers until they become the right length. Things will go easier if you take a little extra off the top and forward portion of the bottom. Then, if you make a double bend n the shape of the letter Z so that the tie in point is on the bottom of the Z, you will be able to tie them in (after flattening the tie m point with pliers) and overcome any difference in height between the body and the tie in po int. Often, when I do this, I pre-trim the butt ends so I donlt have to trim after tying in. Gene Sunday strengthens his Z bend with Zap a Gap. A consideration here is the amount of open space (between the wing and the body) that you want to fill with the underwing. Getting the underwing to lie parallel and close to the body is usually desirable.

In putting on the guinea throat I first choose a speckled feather (not the large polka dot) and then strip the left side (good side facing you, quill down). Be sure that the length of the barbs is going to fit your fly as you see it then tie it in at the tip, at the tie in of the underwing, and wrap it forward. You will see that the stem of the guinea is quite thin and allows the wraps to be closely done. Another way of doing this is to "fold" the hackle instead of stripping one side. Try it both ways and see which you like best. Once the hackle is tied in you'll want to stroke it down and back until it configures to the shape you want and then secure it in place.

Tying in the wing is, at once, the simplest and quickest procedure we do in a salmon fly but also the scariest and most likely to end in disaster. The less one dwells on what could happen and proceeds with this very basic maneuver, the easier it seems to accomplish. The point is to treat attaching the wings just as you do a wet fly quill wing. After humping the wing to shape it to the configuration of your desired end product and overcome any difference in between body height and tie in point, position it just where you want to attach it, come over the top with a loose loop of tying thread, come half way around again and pull straight up. While you are pulling on the thread, you will feel the thread moving through your fingers, feel the wing beginning to compress, and then feel it turn into a small "bump" between your thumb and forefinger. What you need to have going through your head as this happens is that you need to hold the wing in place so that it does not move from the tie in point back, but that the portion forward of the tie inpo mt must move or you will either cut right through the wing with your thread or break the threadl If you handle this move carefully you will reduce the pressure with which you grasp the wings slightly toward the fingertips, or forward of the tie in point. At the same time, roll your fingers out and away from the top of the wing down as the thread compresses the wing. The only way this can be done is not to hold the wing with the fingertips. The "spot" to hold the wing is about 3/8" back from the fingertips so you can have the space to reduce the pressure. When you feel that the thread has "bottomed" out, do not release your grasp of the wing, but put on a second snug wrap. Still grasping the wing with your left hand, grasp the butts with your right and "rock" the wing toward you and away from you so that you feel it is seated dead center on the top of the hook.

Now, still grasping the wing with your left hand, put one more wrap on the tie in point and carefully release the wing and look at it. If it looks good, grasp the wing and wrap about ten wraps at the tie in point. Never wrap back to the left of the tie in point because doing so will begin to move or ruin your wing. Look at the wing again. If it still looks good, unwrap all but a few wraps, put some head cement on the tie m point, allow it to dry tacky, and then, grasp it again with your left hand and carefully trim off the butts as closely as you can to the last wrap of thread. This last wrap of thread should mark the approximate center of where our head will be. It is very important from this point your to use a minimum of carefully placed wraps in order to achieve a small head. At this point I will usually put a second small amount of head cement on the butt of the wing, walk away, and let it dry completely.

Putting on the woodduck sides and Kingfisher cheeks may be done with three wraps of thread. The first side is captured with the first wrap of thread and then that wrap is lifted to capture the second side thereby installing both with one wrap. Follow the same procedure for the Kingfisher cheeks and then add a wrap.

The next step will be to put on the topping you have selected and shaped. You might, at this point, find that you need to do a bit more shaping to fit it perfectly to your wing. After doing so, determine the

length you need, re"mash" the tie m point on the pithy portion, shave it as thin as possible, and then cut it so that only enough of the tie m section is left to tie in. I try to tie m with a maximum of three wraps and then adjust it so that it sets on the fly iust the way I want it and then put a small amount of head cement on to keep it there.

The last addition to this, and most other flies, are the horns that are generally taken from blue and gold Macaw tail feathers. Although most of the literature specifies the center tail, you will find that the side tails will provide longer material and are easier to get but that you will need a left and a right feather. Select a barb for each side of the fly, measure to the tie in point, and tie in with one wrap for each side.

Now is the time to create the head of the fly. Most of the literature suggests that the head should be small and neat. I agree. The problem is that the way many tiers have interpreted this direction is that what is wanted is "small and tiny" and I do not agree. Maybe the reason I do not agree is that I have a very difficult time tying "small and tiny" heads over the combined build up of throat, underwing, wing, sides, cheeks, topping, and horns. To achieve these very small heads the tier must "cheat" the materials forward and use minimal wraps of thread, as I also have suggested in this attempt at a "how to".

Some tiers compress the head for weeks to get it small, some soak the materials under the head with cement and then "shave" the head to a small size, and still another method is to not build a head with thread but to do it with black paint or lacquer of some sort. Whichever method you select will work but you need to determine how much effort should be put into this. The truth is that most of the Atlantic Salmon patterns being tied today are "show and tell" flies. They are framed for the wall or go into collections. If you intend to fish with your product you are going to end up with more thread used, trimming that is not super close, and a head that is "reasonable" if you do it right ...but not tiny.

When you paint the head of your fly you can do the whole thread or only the material colors that "peek" through. Whatever your method, now is not the time to rush. Let it dry thoroughly! Leave it a week! Now put on one or more coats of clear and let them dry. Now you can mount and frame your fly and enjoy it on your wall or have the satisfaction of knowing it is being enjoyed on some other flyfisher's wall because of your kindness and generosity.

Some words about materials. Get the best you can afford. Some may even be free! The fact is that good materials are where you find them. My supply of Spanish gut came from a store that sold more minnows, worms, and crickets than anything else! Keep your eyes open. When you find something exceptional buy extra if you can and give it away to a friend or even just an acquaintance that you know is in to salmon flies. The results are almost biblical. Once you begin to "give", you begin to "receive". I have purchased almost none of my "difficult to find" materials. They began to come to me once I began to live. Sharing not only feels good, but, in the long run, it will help your tying, and help you to gather the materials you seek to tie these most beautiful of all fishing flies.

HOME DYING FOR THE FLY TIER

G. S. (Stack) Scoville, Jr. M.D.

Recently there have been articles in American Angler by Dr. Ted Roubal regarding dying fly tying materials. There is also a very good book by A. K. Best on a similar topic. My apologies to both of these gentleman in advance. The ideals and techniques which I will outline below are adapted from their techniques and advice. I claim no originality for any of the procedures that I list henceforth. The dyeing materials that I will describe include RIT fabric dye and Veniard's material dyes. I have no experience whatsoever with other dying mediums such as those described by Dr. Roubal.

The RIT Working Solution

If one is using RIT dye, a working solution of the dye needs to be made from the powder material. Two packages of RIT dye should be dissolved in one cup of boiling water. It is important not to use an aluminum dish for heating the water as some peculiar reaction appears to take place between the aluminum and some of the salts and/or pigments. I have found that an old Mr. Coffee carafe used on an electric stovetop is quite adequate. You will find that all of the salts -and perhaps all of the pigments do not completely dissolve in a cup of water, but the entire mixture can be decanted into a plastic Tupperware container.

When utilizing this working solution, it is important to stir it from the bottom so that undissolved pigment and salts are put back into suspension and reproducible results can, therefore, be obtained from one batch to the next. Utilizing this working solution contributes greatly to the ease of dyeing materials.

The Dyeing Procedure

What is needed now is a Mr. Coffee with a suitable Mr. Coffee carafe for dyeing materials and a separate Mr. Coffee warmer. Fill the Mr. Coffee carafe with cold water and heat it in the Mr. Coffee with no filter or coffee in the filter basket. To this heated water then add two tablespoons of the working dye solution. If you are utilizing Veniard's dyes, then I would use one level quarter teaspoon of the powder in the dye bath. To the hot dye bath, add two tablespoons or so of white vinegar and a teaspoon or so of Synthrapol. (Synthrapol is manufactured by G & K Craft, Industries, P.O. Box 38, Somerset, Massachusetts 02726.) The Synthrapol will act as a wetting agent so the material, such as feathers, are adequately penetrated with the dye bath solution.

Place well washed and completely degreased materials in the dye bath. I cannot recommend a specific length of time for color saturation of the material. For some of the reds and blues, the dyeing time may take longer than yellows.

It is convenient to have a hand-held hair dryer available. Color results can be quickly checked by taking individual feathers, for example from an Amherst Cape or an individual turkey or goose feather and blow-drying it on the spot. If, when dry, the color still seems a bit pale or poorly saturated, then simply return that item to the dye bath and continue the dyeing process of all the other materials. When the blow-dried specimen is at the color you desire, remove all of the materials from the dye bath and rinse them carefully in cold water. At that point, they can either be air dried on newspaper or again the blowdryer will speed things along.

There are custom dyers who will dip and dye materials for a two toned effect. I have no personal experience with this, but Dr. Roubal does refer to it in his works.

I hope this is useful information to the subscribers of The Salmon Flyer. Perhaps others of you have other experiences with dyeing materials that would be useful to share.

I have found this technique useful for producing my own dyed turkey tail, goose shoulder, Amherst capes, and Amherst tail feathers. I must admit it is not a bad way to spend the afternoon, especially if the football games are not that close.

THE CONTEMPLATIVE TIER

Robert C. Arnold

I've long maintained that I can spot a Ron Alcott salmon fly at 10 paces. There's something about the hump in the wing and the fly's overall neatness. But I never knew exactly how he produced the effect, or where it comes from. Now I do. With publication of his new book, "Building Classic Salmon Flies' (Countryman Press, Woodstock, Vermont, $35; Edited by Arleigh. D. Richardson III, Foreword by Dick Stewart) he reveals all; or, if not all, certainly most of what he is capable of rendering in clear, straightforward prose. It is a fine book and a big help to us tiers of salmon flies, whether we are beginners, intermediates, or advanced. Yes, even advanced tiers will benefit, for I know none who are never on the outlook for new tricks and techniques, and there are numerous useful ones described in the book.

Alcott immediately acknowledges his influences: T. E. Pryce-Tannatt's "How To Dress Salmon Flies" (London, 1914, reprinted 1986) is the chief one, closely followed by Major J. H. Hale's "How To Tie Salmon Flies", (1916). Today Pryce-Tannatt's book is one of the revered ones and no library of a salmon-fly aficionado is complete without it. Because Alcott is so strongly influenced by Pryce-Tannatt, it is perhaps sensible to look at him first.

Pryce-Tannatt lived long (as did George Kelson) and his career spanned two centuries, but being born later he was able to use photography to show us what he is after. What a big difference it makes. With Kelson we must fight our way though his brilliant but tangled prose, reading and rereading the text, then falling back on those incredible illustrations. (Incidentally, Kelson's Salmon Fly is back in print on both sides of the Atlantic, and The Land and Water Salmon Flies, assembled from the published "Kelson"

cards, can be obtained only from Britain.) The Kelson chroma-litho plates may be inspiring, but they resemble no known arrangement and shape of materials and are next to impossible to duplicate at the vise - if anybody is interested in trying (and I am sure there are some of us who already have tried).

The photographs in Pryce-Tannatt's book, however, are of flies that look highly familiar to tiers of today. They are modem flies, and after going back to look at them again while reading Alcott it is clear how strongly they have influenced him. The two men perhaps comprise the best in what might be called the contemporary classic salmon style and serve as excellent models. Before departing from them, say, to tie more elaborately or in the style of somebody else (Traherne, for instance, or the modem-day "skins" of Cohen or Schmookler), one should know the Pryce-Tannatt style well, or else the chance for serious error looms large.

Alcott points out that continuous practice is imperative to improvement and quotes Pryce-Tannatt on the subject. I shall do so, too: "I am however well aware that the real expert will be able to detect in the colored plates those flies which show undoubted blemishes and perhaps to trace therefrom equally as well as I can, the flies which were dressed nearly two years ago and those which were dressed only a few weeks back." These flies, he indicates, look "jagged". Well, Pryce-Tannatt has the right, I suppose, to call them so, but I do not; they are excellent flies and the slightly Arnold ragged look is the one I prefer, at least for fishing flies. The concept of fishing flies must ever lie in the backs of our minds, even while we aspire toward museum specimens. A certain shaggy look I find greatly appealing. The fish like them, too.

Pryce-Tannatt speaks of "soul" in terms of flies and tying. It is a surprisingly modern term and has bad recent amplifications for society at large. Alcott is quick to echo his master and to add to the aesthetic statement, when at the end of his book he says, "Since there are no hard and fast standards in any aspect of building salmon flies, the expression of ability, ingenuity, and individuality is not compromised by a borrowed idea. Everyone who builds featherwing salmon flies has artistic license." (Page 160.) At the same time Alcott is keen on us knowing the literature and working in the classic tradition-even if it is a modem version of it. For instance, he quotes PryceTannatt on the use of "substitute materials" and says he prefers the term "alternative materials." The rare materials of Kelson's day were already getting scare by Pryce-Tannatt's time and substitutes (I mean alternates) needed to be found, or else tying would grind to a stop or become illegal. Ever more so the difficulty in our time. So Alcott advocates the use, say, of mottled turkey in the place of speckled bustard. Most of us would agree to do this, unless we had found a source of legal bustard at a reasonable price. (A reasonable price, of course, is a relative term, and tying as beautifully as Paul Schmookler does, for instance, may well be dependent upon having a private source of exotic feathers or else a private income. As Trevor Gong pointed out to me the other day, "We have come to the time of the $100 fly."

I misunderstood his remark and replied, "Most good tiers get more than that for a full-dressed fly." He said, 'No, what I mean is that the hook and the materials alone will cost $100." Good point and well taken. Indeed they do, in many cases, if one is determined to be fully authentic. But Alcott tells us that we need only find common, inexpensive alternatives to tie well, and that this choice is the same one tiers of old had to contend with. It is a key point. Still, I can see the difference between speckled bustard and turkey in a mixed wing, and I am not quite able to get past it.

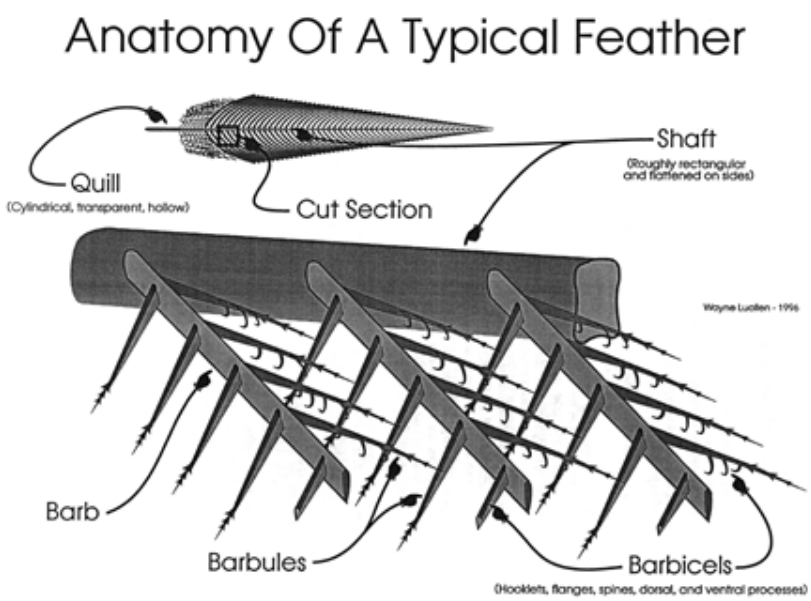
Alcott takes us step-by-step through the tying of builtwing salmon flies incorporating all of the basic elements, beginning with a tag tied according to Hale. The fly is a Parson. Since flies vary according to type and style, he follows the Parson with a Doctor, not repeating any of the common steps and delineating only the ones of departure, such as the uniform silver tinsel body. This next leads to tying a Durham Ranger, with its floss and spun-dubbing body and veiled tippet wings. They are excellent choices and the classic ones. Oddly, Poul Jorgensen uses much the same patterns as illustrations, but nowhere nearly so well delineates what is involved in each of the steps. Jorgensen is not mentioned in Alcott's text, almost as though Alcott does not want to acknowledge the man's contribution to salmon fly tying. He does discuss Eric Taverner - whose book, along with Jorgensen's, got many of us started.

The book expands nicely on an article Alcott wrote for The Fly Fisher several years ago, which helped myself and others find alternative materials for winging and led to the commercial production of dyed substitutes, such as the tiny neck feathers from ringnecked pheasants for blue chatterer, toucan, and Indian crow. He also championed the use of various turkey feathers. Without these substitutes now so readily available many of us would be stopped dead at various critical points in our tying. While Jorgensen found and marketed good substitutes for dubbing seal bodies, Alcott's contribution lies more in locating alternative winging material sources, which is perhaps more difficult.

Alcott's text is drawn from the many classes in tying he has conducted over the past couple of decades. He is one of the leaders in the creation of the salmon-fly-tying renaissance we all share in. This book will take a beginner with ordinary skills in tying trout wet flies and,. if he or she has the patience and willingness to redo a step until it is correct, show him or her how to tie our favorite kind of fly, right from the first day. The book includes twelve color plates of individual flies, plus dressings for 25 more. The step-by-step black and white photographs are by the author and the drawings at the beginning of each chapter (and elsewhere) are by his daughter Rhonda and Paul Anthony. I found them to be similar to those of Milton Weiler, who did the ones for Joe Bates's 1975 book, "Art of the Atlantic Salmon Fly".

A few significant tips from Alcott: use a ruler to measure out proportions and mark the distances on the underbody, steam your crests for toppings and tails, back up and re-do whenever necessary, floss tags should taper, tie in body hackles by their tips so the fibers increase in length towards the head, throats are to be at least as long as the body hackles and often should be longer (use schlappen). The height of the wing is equal to the gape of the hook, wings extend beyond the bend of the hook and crest tail tips are meant to touch crest toppings precisely (and his always do), heads are blunt and bullet-shaped. Practice, practice, practice. Do not move on until satisfied with what has gone before.

The Salmon Flyer
Vol. 8 - No. 3, Autumn, 1996



Vane/Web - flat expanse of barbs on a feather

THE NATURE OF FEATHER CONSTRUCTION

Wayne Luallen

An important aspect of fly tying is sharing information. In turn it behooves us as fly tiers to speak the same language. We have all read fly patterns that refer to "quills," "barbs," "barbules," "fibers," "shafts," "stems," "vanes," and so forth, but when we read these terms do we know what they have reference to? We may, but what about the author; did he truly describe by name what he intended? How often have we read "quill" when in fact what was referred to was actually a "barb" or perhaps "shaft?" How often have we read "fibers" when the author meant "barbs" or perhaps "barbules?" How often have we read "barbs," "barbules," "fibers," or even "barbels" (which are tactile processes on the lips of a fish rather than components of a feather) when referring to a feather's ability to marry, but in actuality "barbicels" or perhaps more specifically "hooklets" is what was meant? If we spoke the same language we would better comprehend what was intended. It may not be necessary to know scientific names, but if we wish to communicate, we need to have standards.

The parts of a typical feather are simple to learn, and once understood help us to better appreciate why feathers do what they do in different applications. For instance why does a dry fly hackle when wound

on an uneven surface (i.e., twisted thread, bulky surface, etc.) lead to a fly with the barbs strewn all about? Why does a hackle mounted on an even surface produce a fly with barbs at a distinct ninety degree angle out from that surface? If you understand the rectangular shape of the rachis and the location of the barbs on the rachis it all makes sense. What does understanding of feather construction lead to? Better flies that we control rather than the material controlling us. It also leads to a more appropriate selection of materials for specific tasks.

This article is not intended to be a complete scientific discourse on the nature of feathers. Feathers are as unique as the birds that wear them. The following discussion is general in its scope while being specific enough to cover the majority of feather types that the fly tier will encounter. All the same great effort has been placed on accuracy of feather and component names and descriptions. Perhaps just as important has been a desire to whet the appetite of the fly tier toward a better understanding of not only physical construction, types, and purposes of feathers, but also to make that same tier more curious about other materials not understood. Observation leads to understanding. Understanding leads to better results in any endeavor. Sadly it is easier to take for granted what has been said in the past rather than investigate on our own.

It may prove beneficial to have a selection of feathers on hand while reviewing this article such as an eyed peacock upper tail covert, a turkey tail feather, a turkey "marabou" semiplume, a ring-necked pheasant contour feather, and a rooster neck hackle.

Feather Anatomy 101

The quill or calamus is often mistakenly described as being anything from the feather shaft to the barbs themselves. The fact of the matter is that the quill is simply that portion of the feather that is inserted in the skin follicle; nothing more. It is cylindrical, transparent, and hollow. There are no barbs attached to the quill. The shaft or rachis is that portion of the feather that the barbs are attached to. It is flattened on the sides that support the barbs. It differs from the quill by being roughly rectangular in cross section. Internally it is not hollow, but rather is filled with a pithy material that contains air cells.

The barbs or rami (singular: ramus) come off the flattened sides of the shaft more toward the anterior (face) surface of the feather and in parallel rows generally opposing one another. They point outward and toward the tip of the feather. They are somewhat ovoid in cross-section (thinner side to side, wider front to back,) broader near their attachment to the rachis, flattening and narrowing as they approach the tip. Barbs, like the shaft, are filled with a pithy material containing air cells. A feather may have only a couple of dozen barbs or several hundred.

Barbules or radii (singular: radius) extend out from either side of the barbs. From the base to about half way to their tip, they are ribbon-like (the basal lamella). The distal half is more whip-like (the pennulum.) The barbules on the distal (upper) edge of a barb extend outward almost perpendicular to the barb. The barbules on the proximal (lower) edge of a barb lay more parallel with the barb. This is readily visible with a peacock upper tail covert feather's barbs, commonly referred to as "herl." ("Herl" according to dictionary definition is a barb or barbs of a feather, originating from the Middle English "harle or herle" which referred to "fiber, hair of flax, or hemp.") Barbules extend out from a barb more proximal to the anterior (face) surface similar to barbs on a shaft. Again note the appearance of the peacock upper tail covert feather. When viewed from the anterior surface of the feather, the brightly colored "eye" is more dominate because the barbules (which often provide the majority of a feather's color) are attached closer to the anterior edge of the barb. When viewed from the opposing surface, the flat, rather dull color is due to the dominance of the color of the edges of the barbs as well as the location and physical shape, and in turn, light reflectance of the barbules.

Barbules may or may not have attached to them structures collectively referred to as barbicels. Barbicels allow adjacent barbules to interlock or marry. They differ on the barbule in shape and function by location. Distal barbules (those extending off the barb toward the feather tip) with barbicels have projecting structures at the base of the whip-like pennulum (distal half of the barbule) on the ventral (under) surface that are long and hooked, hooklets (hamuli,) with the remainder of the pennulum having shorter spines (ventral processes.) Proximal barbules (those extending off the barb toward the quill) tend to be more twisted than the distal barbules, and have a trough-shaped dorsal flange (groove) on the anterior (front) edge. As the hooklets of a distal barbule overlap the adjacent proximal barbule, the hooklets attach to the grooved edge while the spines stop the hooklets from sliding too far. The diagonal crossover of barbules creates a visible herringbone pattern. Both distal and proximal barbules have other lesser processes on the underside of the ribbon-like lamella referred to as ventral teeth and on the

upper side of the whip-like pennulum referred to as dorsal cilium and spines. The hooklets and spines create the marriage of the adjacent barbs while the dorsal processes and ventral teeth catch the barbs and barbules of overlaying feathers to help maintain a solid, airtight surface in flight. In turn the feather vane is maintained as not only air tight, but with some birds, a watertight structure. Barbicels is a collective term referring to all the processes that interlock to create the vane.

The shaft gives support while the vane (vexillum) or the web of a feather (which includes all the flat, expanded barbs, as well as any attached barbules, and barbicels) provides the surface for an airfoil in flight feathers and for covering and insulation in contour feathers. At the typical feather's base, the vane is downy and provides some insulation. This part of the vane is referred to as the plumulaceous vane. The remaining portion of the vane is firmer and compactly arranged, and is referred to as the pennaceous vane. The proportion of plumulaceous and pennaceous material present often defines feather types. Some feathers are strictly plumulaceous, others are strictly pennaceous, and others are both plumulaceous and pennaceous.

Birds have a tremendous variety of combinations of feather components. For instance the Crowned Crane crest feathers are each made up of a short quill, a twisted rachis, and few barbs. What the fly tier considers the useable portion of a typical cocks hackle in a dry fly has few or no barbules on the barbs since those barbs with barbules are stripped prior to application. (Fly tiers somewhat incorrectly refer to this part of the feather as being the "web" or "webby portion" of the feather. Web is a term synonymous with the whole vane.) Some feathers have barbules without barbicels. Examples would include peacock upper tail covert feather barbs below the "eye" as well as down feathers from any bird. (When considering "peacock herl," the barbs are often mistakenly referred to as "quills." The barbules also are confusingly referred to as "herl" for example where the fly pattern for a Quill Gordon calls for a "quill body" that requires the removal of "the herl" from the barb. In actuality, the "quill" is a barb and the "herl" referred to are barbules on the herl or barb.) Barbicels are found on flight feathers (i.e., turkey tail feathers, peacock secondary wing feathers, etc.) with the exception of flightless birds (i.e., emu, ostrich, kiwi, etc.) Just as a barb does not necessarily have barbules, barbules do not necessarily have barbicels. Turkey "marabou" (semi-plume) is an example of a feather with barbules, but no barbicels. Body (contour) feathers of most pheasants are examples of feathers having barbules without barbicels (plumulaceous vane) on some barbs and barbules with barbicels (pennaceous vane) on others.

The arrangement of barbs, barbules, and barbicels is important to understand when marrying feather strips for a wing on a wet fly or Atlantic Salmon fly. The marriage of a strip of upper barbs to a correctly matching strip of lower barbs is quite easy if the face side of the upper strip is placed slightly behind the face side of the lower strip. This allows the hooklets on the barbules of the top barb of the lower strip to have opportunity to grasp the grooved edge (dorsal flange) of the barbules on the upper strips' bottom barb. If the strips are overlapped immediately above and below one another, or perhaps the upper strip is in front of the lower strip, due to their arrangement on the barbules, a complete interlocking of hooklets to flanges will not occur. If a strip is overlaid with another strip, but the matching strip is upside down, this arrangement of barbicels will not allow the strips to marry. If a right strip is overlaid with a left strip, even though the proximal to distal arrangement of the barbules is correct, no reliable marriage will occur, because the hooklets and flanges do not align.

Many feathers develop fault bars across the vane. As feathers grow, a disruption in cell development may occur leaving distinct lines across the vane generally perpendicular to the shaft. These are due to stress, other abnormal conditions, or may be present under normal conditions. A fault bar's appearance is due to underdevelopment of barbules or total lack of barbules in the area of the disruption.

Feather Types

Each feather grows out of the dermal tissue from a follicle in similar fashion to hair in mammals. Some feathers can be moved by muscles attached to the follicles. For example, tail and wing feathers can be adjusted to aid in flight. Body feathers can be erected independently or in groups for the purpose of body temperature adjustment as well as for display. Most feather follicles are well supplied with nerves, so it appears that feathers may serve as organs of touch. During development the feather is a living structure well supplied with blood, but once matured the feather itself is a dead structure. After a period of use it is shed or molted, and then replaced by a new feather from the same follicle.

There are two basic types of feathers from which others are derived; down feathers and vaned feathers. Down feathers are essentially random fluff having no barbicels on the barbules to interlock their barbs. In nestling birds down feathers consist of a tuft of barbs without a rachis. The juvenile and adult bird

have down feathers that include a rachis. Vaned feathers include all feathers with a flat expanse of barbs extending parallel out from the shaft. Contour and flight feathers are pennaceous vaned feathers and are accepted as vaned feathers, where that plumulaceous feathers generally are not. Technically speaking, as discussed under "Feather Anatomy 101," a marabou feather, though strictly a plumulaceous feather, is also a vaned feather. Down feathers, though plumulaceous, have a random arrangement of barbs, and thus would not be considered "vaned."

Other feather types similar in some respects to down and vaned feathers while unique in others include filoplumes, bristles, and semiplumes. A filoplume (thread feather) is a hair-like feather with barbs at the end of the shaft. They are distributed to all feather types, are always intimate to other feathers (from one to twelve adjacent a feather,) but grow out of their own follicles. Their purpose seems to have something to do with subtle detection of movement of the adjacent feather such that they may, for example, aid in adjustment of feathers when in flight. (Filoplumes are sometimes incorrectly referred to as pinfeathers. A pinfeather is any feather that is immature.) Virtually all bristles are found on bird's heads. They are stiff with a tapered shaft having barbs only on the proximal portion of the shaft (i.e., Crown Crane crest feathers.) Often they are mistaken for filoplumes that differ by having barbs at the distal end of the shaft. A semiplume is a down-like (plumulaceous) feather having a rachis, barbs, and barbules, but no barbicels (i.e., "marabou".)

Feather Names

Numerous specialized names are applied to feathers appropriate to their location on the bird, from the face to the toes, but there are just a few basic types that should concern most fly tying needs.

Contour feathers cover the bird's body. They are close fitting, yet separated from the skin to help isolate the body from outside humidity and temperature. With the assistance of follicle muscles, the contour feathers can be erected, then lowered to adjust the depth of the protective layer. Contour feathers are typically broad, thin, curving inward toward the skin, directed toward the tail in overlapping rows, and have a combined pennaceous/plumulaceous vane. They help to smooth and streamline the body for flight. In some species they may be greatly modified for purposes of display or some other ornamental purpose. Many contour feathers have afterfeathers attached at the base. These are small plumulaceous feathers that may or may not have a shaft (hyporachis.) Usually a contour feathers' afterfeather is no more than half the length of the attached contour feather, yet exceptions always seem to occur in nature. Two birds, the Emu and the Cassowary, have afterfeathers as long as their contour feathers, while some birds such as the pigeon and ostrich have no afterfeathers.

Flight feathers include the tail feathers (rectrices) and wing feathers (remiges) as well as supplemental feathers that cover the adjacent upper and under surfaces.

The tail feathers (rectrices) act as a stabilizer tilting the front of the body up and down, as well as an air brake when the bird lands, but they are not used for steering except in steep turns. Tail feathers are usually large, stiff in texture, asymmetric, have vanes that are almost entirely pennaceous, and lack afterfeathers. In most cases tail assemblies are made up of 10-12 feathers (with some pheasants having up to 24) arranged in a single horizontal row. They each overlap their lateral (outside) edge over the medial (inside) edge of the adjacent feather. The outermost feather's lateral vane is narrow, stiff, and convex compared to the softer, longer, concave barbs of the inner vane. This effect is digressive as the feathers work toward the center pair, such that the center pair's vane is fairly symmetric right to left. The turkey tail assembly when fanned clearly demonstrates this. At the bases of the tail feathers are upper tail and under tail covert feathers that smooth and streamline the tail of the bird. Exceptions do occur such as with the peacock upper tail coverts, which lack streamlining, but are useful for display.

The wing feathers (remiges) are used for steering. Like tail feathers, they are usually large, stiff in texture, asymmetric, have vanes that are almost entirely pennaceous, and lack afterfeathers. Wing feathers include primary, secondary, and tertiary feathers. The primary wing feathers (typically 10-11 in number) attach to the middle digit and the hand. They are asymmetrical in vane structure with the their leading and trailing margins notched. This sudden narrowing produces a series of slotted spaces between the primaries that in flight reduces air turbulence over the wing tips. Where turbulence is most extreme, the leading edge barbs are broadened and stiffened. These barbs are referred to in fly tying parlance as "biots." The secondary wing feathers (anywhere from 9 to 40 in number and up to six inches wide by six feet in length) attach to the ulna of the forearm. The tertiary wing feathers attach to the humerus. There may also be a group of 3 or 4 feathers attached to the bones of the thumb forming a

bastard wing (alula.) These feathers lie flat during normal flight, but extend out when flying slowly to prevent stalling.

Wing feathers may be uniquely developed for specific purposes. For example waterfowl wing feathers are designed to be water repellent. This is accomplished by modifications in the structure and position of the barbules such that a surface through which water cannot enter is created. They are so unique that a specific name is applied to this type of barbule/barbicel structure; "flexules." The owl differs dramatically in having soft overlays of barbules on the surface of the feathers that keep it silent in flight.

The bases of the wing feathers as well as the upper and lower surface of the remainder of the wing are covered by several rows of small, flattened wing coverts (tectrices.) The largest wing coverts are adjacent the wing feathers digressing in size toward the wings leading edge. The vane is principally pennaceous and designed to supply an airtight surface to the wing. The upper wing coverts, like contour feathers, are convex. Under wing coverts are concave, which fits them up into the underside curve of the wing. (This is an important consideration for the fly tier. For example in Frederic Tolfrey's Jones's Guide to Norway a component of "The Major's" wing calls for an overlay of "two snipe feathers." These are under wing coverts on the snipe, and thus are concave. Their natural shape forces the fly tier to carefully select a pair that will produce little or no outward curve when placed over the wing.) Those coverts on the leading edge of the wing initially extend vertically and then bend backward over the wing at an acute right angle creating a camber or upward curve.

A bird passes through various distinct stages of plumage. The plumage of the nestling stage is mostly down and contour feathers which plays a role primarily of warmth and concealment. There may also be an intermediate nestling stage with yet a different plumage. The adult may have different stages of plumage such as immature, full adult, pre-nuptial, and courtship. Male to female can be quite different, especially in the adult. Some immature birds take on the appearance of a mature female (i.e., some cockatoos and parrots.) For the fly tier this can be of importance since some feathers in a fly may be obtainable only from an adult male, an adult female, an immature male and/or female, either the adult female or an immature bird, or perhaps any of these. For example in The Salmon Fly, George Kelson's dressings for "The Silver Spectre" and "Prince's Mixture" call for the use of Black Cockatoo's tail. Experience teaches that the feather of choice is only found on female or immature male Red-Tailed Black Cockatoo mottled orange, black and yellow center tails. A mature male has completely different black-red-black center tails. Then in Francis Francis' A Book on Angling another dressing may simply read "Black Cockatoo or any other black feather." Here the feather becomes more obvious and might be either a strip from the black portion of an adult male Red-Tailed Black Cockatoo's tail, or better yet the all black tail of an adult male Palm Cockatoo.

Summation

The more the fly tier knows about the materials he has access to, the better his ability to select and apply the proper material to achieve the desired end result. Do not always accept what is read or told without a bit of personal investigation. Take time to look at materials. Feel them. Observe them under magnification. Do some homework in books such as Darrel Martin's Fly Tying Methods, which includes excellent microphotographs of all manner of tying materials. Knowledge of materials, dexterity, and experience are always found in abundance with the best fly tiers.

A quote from Mr. Martin's book sums up so well a great deal of the motivation for this article: "The birth of a fly begins with a feather. The tyer will require time and experience to know the various feather types, their numerous names, and their craft possibilities. The fly at the end of your tippet should be the result of all your knowledge and skill; it is the touchstone that drifts over the mystery of water and trout. After all, a fly is more feather than steel. It is the different feathers and the different methods that make a different fly. (Fly Tying Methods, pg. 59.)

Definitions

Afterfeather - attached at the base of contour feathers; small plumulaceous feathers which may or may not have a shaft.

Barbicel - a collective term referring to all the processes found on the barbule that interlock to create the vane.

Barbs - sing ramus, pl rami; fibers that extend off the flattened sides of the shaft in parallel rows generally opposing one another; somewhat ovoid in cross-section; filled with a pithy material containing air cells.

Barbules - sing radius, pl. radii; extend out from either side of the barbs; each is ribbon-like from the base to about half way to the tip and whip-like over the distal half.

Basal Lamella - ribbon-like base of the barbule; ventral teeth are attached to the under surface.

Bastard Wing - sing alula; feathers that lie flat during normal flight, but extend out when flying slowly to prevent stalling.

Bristles - generally found on bird's heads; stiff with a tapered shaft having barbs only on the proximal portion of the shaft.

Contour Feathers - cover the bird's body, typically broad, thin, curving inward toward the skin, and directed toward the tail in overlapping rows; help to smooth and streamline the body for flight.

Dorsal Flanges - trough-shaped proximal barbules that are more twisted than the distal barbules; hooklets overlap and attach to the flanges.

Flight Feathers - include the tail feathers and wing feathers as well as supplemental feathers that cover the adjacent upper and under surfaces.

Filoplume - synonymous with thread feather; hairlike feather with barbs at the end of the shaft, always intimate to other feathers (from one to twelve adjacent a feather,) but grow out of their own follicles.

Hooklets - pl hamuli; hooked barbicel structures on the distal barbules that overlap and attach to opposing dorsal flanges.

Pennaceous - referring to barbs having barbules with barbicels that interlock adjacent barbs.

Pennulum - whip-like tip of the barbule; hooklets are attached to the proximal, ventral portion with the dorsal spines and dorsal cilium attached to the remainder of the pennulum.

Pinfeather - any feather that is immature.

Plumulaceous - referring to downy like barbs having barbules without barbicels.

Primary Wing Feathers - typically 10-11 in number; attach to the middle digit and the hand; asymmetrical in vane structure with the their leading and trailing margins notched.

Quill - sing calamus; that portion of the feather that is inserted in the skin follicle. It is cylindrical, transparent, and hollow having no barbs attached.

Secondary Wing Feathers - from 9 to 40 in number; attach to the ulna of the forearm.

Semiplume - a plumulaceous vaned feather (i.e., "marabou".)

Shaft - sing rachis; that portion of the feather that the barbs are attached to; flattened on the sides that support the barbs; roughly rectangular in cross section; filled with a pithy material that contains air cells.

Spines - ventral processes on the distal barbules that stop the hooklets from sliding too far and collapsing the vane.

Tail Feathers - pl rectrices; large, stiff in texture, asymmetric, have vanes that are almost entirely pennaceous, and lack afterfeathers; act as a stabilizer tilting the front of the body up and down, as well as an air brake.

Tertiary Wing Feathers - attach to the humerus.

Upper and Under Tail Covert Feathers - smooth and streamline the tail of the bird.

Vane - sing vexillum; the web of a feather which includes all the flat, expanded barbs, as well as any attached barbules, and barbicels which provide the surface for an airfoil in flight feathers and for covering and insulation in contour feathers.

Vaned Feathers - a collective term generally referring to a feather that has at least some interlocked barbs as seen in contour, wing, and tail feathers on birds that can fly.

Web - synonymous with vane.

Wing Coverts - pl tectrices; cover the upper and lower wing surfaces and the bases of the wing feathers.

Wing Feathers - pl remiges; usually large, stiff in texture, asymmetric, have vanes that are almost entirely pennaceous, and lack afterfeathers; used for steering.

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With thanks to my friends Marvin Nolte (U.S.A.,) Martin Jorgensen (Denmark,) and Garth Coghill (New Zealand) for their advise and comments.

THE CURSE OF THE SALMON FLY, PART DEUX

Michel Fontan

A few years ago, I submitted an article to the Flyer entitled: "The Curse of the Salmon Fly". It was mainly about the misadventures of any beginner Salmon Fly tier in finding appropriate materials and proper advice from the experts. Two names came up: Wayne Luallen & Marvin Nolte. I don't need to introduce these two individuals, you all know who they are and what good tiers they are, and most importantly, how dedicated they are to the art of Atlantic Salmon Fly dressing, not to mention their willingness to help any tier to perfect his or her skills, answer questions and share information...

So, when Jeff Welker's article came to my attention ("Contrivance" - The Salmon Flyer, April, 1996), 1 had this feeling of "deja vu", as we say in France. I decided to look at myself now and see what kind of answers I could get after a few years of this Fly obsession!

I won't be talking much about techniques because this is issue based on "relativity", and every one will find his or her own answers to that. I would like to talk more about materials. I have to tell you that although I do have in my possession a relatively small amount of authentic materials (enough to tie 1 or 2 dozen flies), I am no longer obsessed with the "Exotic Feather Syndrome". Granted it is easy not to feel a need for something that you do have, but this is not the point I'm trying to make. As a beginner I concentrated too much time and money in the search for rare materials instead of concentrating on sharpening my skills and my imagination as a salmon fly dresser. A good friend of mine, also a salmon fly tier, is becoming so involved with the pursuit of materials that it in itself has became a completely new hobby for him. He is not spending that much time on tying anymore but concentrates mainly on Traherne's or Schoomkler's patterns, which, of course, require exotic materials. Indeed, these are really beautiful flies, but what are we looking at here, a very skillfully tied fly or an assemblage of beautiful feathers? There is a strong attraction to these patterns, but salmon flies are not just these exaggerations, as Kelson termed them. The beauty of salmon flies lies in the diversity of the styles, the

creativity of the tiers and the use of more common materials. As a beginner, it is easy to get discouraged in the process of acquiring the right feathers, even simple ones such as Turkey, Woodduck, Teal... which are suitable for our tying, and keeping a sufficient supply of feathers that can, over time, become more difficult to obtain - even more so than Indian Crow or Kori bustard. What I learned over the years is that things come eventually to you with TIME. As you progress in your Journey through the Salmon Fly world, more information, more connections, more opportunities become available to you and slowly but surely your fly tying box fills up. This is a never-ending story, as your search will continue for better supplies.

I have more problems today finding decent white turkey tails than locating Indian Crow. By the way, of all the birds in the Cotinga family (Indian Fruit Crows, Chatterers and Cock of the Rock) only the Cocks of the Rock are listed on the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES), Annex 1, whereas other Cotingas are perfectly legal to sell or purchase. The high prices that are being charged for such exotic materials are more a result of the "I want/need this so bad" attitude of many tiers that has created this kind of high-dollar market than a more realistic one and we all pay the price for it now. It has also created greed and has extended to some less conscientious dealers who are dealing in endangered species without, any proper or legal paperwork. Beware as the list of endangered birds grows every year, thanks to our ecological policies!!, and the possession of all or part of any listed bird can become a crime. As listed in CITES: all species of Bustard, Macaws (in their country of origin!), Jungle Cock, Cock of the Rock, all species of Toucan (but for one lesser species), some types of pheasant (especially coming from Asia and Micronesia) and other less used birds. As if this is not enough, some species are also protected by state or country laws. My advice to you is to be careful about what you are getting and whom you are dealing with.

Luckily, there are a few people in this country and other countries who are avid bird breeders and if you are lucky enough to get to one of them, then you might be able to insure yourself with some valuable supply sources. I found some Argus and Grey Peacock Pheasant just 60 miles away from my house in France !!! And the local zoo is providing me with Macaw, Condor and occasionaly Ibis molted feathers. This can be a rewarding experience as well as a learning one. If you become acquainted with breeders, show them some of your work, and take the time to listen to their passion, as they are as passionate about birds as we are with Salmon Flies, they could become very valuable friends if you get to know them. Other people to become acquainted with are taxidermists, hunters and zoo personnel.

What did I learned over the years? Every time I visit a fly shop, I usually find something of interest: a different shade of blue goose shoulder feathers or some white tip turkey tail..., not enough to fulfill my needs but when added to other feathers in my collection, it might just be the way to go. I found myself more in need of common feathers than exotic ones and I'm using substitutes in 99% of my tying. And yes, a good Indian Crow substitute is harder to find than the real McCoy. So learn the joy of dyeing your own!!!

From once being a totally ignorant fly tier I have become a more knolwedgeable one - but I'm still a compulsive buyer when it comes to fly tying materials, especially Salmon Fly materials!

WELCOME TO THE RENAISSANCE

The Contemplative Fly Tier

Robert C. Arnold

We seem to be living in the midst of a flyfishing renaissance and it has spilled over into tying; - similarly, we have apparently regressed a full century, and the notions and teachings of George Kelson are very much alive. Whenever I go out to a river (frequently, these days), I see a collection of characters who would be very much at home in the late Nineteenth Century. Why, they're even toting Spey rods, heavy Hardy by DC Taupo reels or imitations, and double-tapered lines of extraordinary length. The flies are right out of Kelson's The Salmon Fly, down to the wings married with exotic feathers. (Brother, can you spare some bustard?).

So it seems only right and natural that there be a rebirth of books on the salmon fly. Some are old, and some are newly written for these times. (A few might argue stodgily that we have no need of new books on the salmon fly or on flyfishing for salmon and steelhead in general, since the old ones do quite well. I am not wholly unsympathetic to this point of view.)

Two publishers are capitalizing (I used the word advisedly) on this rebirth in learning. They are doing so by republishing the great books of the past. Paul Schmookler is advising John Culler of Camden, South Carolina, on what is important and what is not, and Paul's precision and skills are being well utilized. Caller has reprinted first Kelson's The Salmon Fly and now Blacker and Francis. More are in the works. He has plans to put the badly needed Eric Taverner back into print. And Frank Amato some time ago reprinted "Jock Scott's" Greased Line Fishing for Salmon – with an introduction by Bill McMillan and instructions on fishing for steelhead that Bill Bakke made well known through personal instruction with both McMillan and Trey Combs. The book is still in print.

Also notable is the effort of Justin Knowles in Britain. I've mentioned his edition of Kelson, plus the handsome Land and Water Salmon Flies, also by Kelson. So I was excited when I learned that Mr. Knowles was publishing the intricate Traherne patterns. And I had seen advertisements for the extraordinary The Salmon flies of Major John Popkin Traherne (1826-1901), published by The Complete Sportsman in Millis, Maine. But at $375, it was beyond my price range. So Knowles's book at $73 USA seemed a bargain. Alas, it proved a disappointment, and no bargain at all, for it is largely a repeat of the patterns already listed in Kelson and sorely lacking in gnold illustrations-including those quaint colored drawings that both Kelson's have and which look unlike any flies that have gone out into the world.

When I mentioned this to Knowles, he said the book did not pretend to be anything other than what it was – a listing of the patterns already found in Kelson's magazine writings (and later in his books) and attributed there to Traherne. This is true. Yet I had hoped for more.

The introduction to the Traherne by David Burnette is more than a disappointment; it is an insult. Traherne was a superb flyfisher, as well as tyer, and Kelson acknowledged as much. But we do not raise Traherne's reputation by dragging down Kelson's with remarks like "the arch hustler and windbag George Kelson, who wouldn't have recognized bad form if you'd have shoved it up his nose. . . ." This is uncalled for, unnecessary, and is not responsible writing in a book about Traherne, or elsewhere; I can think of a different aperture where one might shove a copy of this book, one which seems to be Burnette's chief, identifying characteristic. But now, I'm playing his game, and not my own.

Hoping for more and getting it is precisely what Knowles offers in so many of his other fine books that I do not want to slight him here because of this meager one. A friend lent me his copy of E. J. Malone's Irish Salmon Flies. It was published in 1993 by Knowles in his The Flyfisher's Classic Library, and is an updated version of Malone's 1984 instant classic. Green cloth, with a dark green leather spine and gold stamp, it lacks the customary marbled end papers and substitutes rich, bright Kelly green, but the paper is excellent, the inking unniggardly, and the color plates first-rate. The book sells for $100 and is probably worth it. If the flies seem dark, it is not because of bad, photographic lighting but simply because Irish flies are dark. The Michael Rogan series of salmon flies was tied by Frankie McPhillips on contemporary Addington and Hutchinson Hooks (Partridge) and are good examples of the PryceTannatt school of tying. They are a bit shaggy and fishy as hell. They make me want to sit down and tie similar flies, and go right out and fish them.

Knowles is doing some good work on his side of the Atlantic. His list grows and now numbers 50 great angling book reprints. Most are from Britain, which is understandable. It was there our literature started. It is what we have in common with those on the other side of the big drink. Knowles acknowledges what might be called the American division in fishing literature. For a long time now, we have stood on our own two feet. First it chronicled flyfishing for salmon in New Brunswick, Labrador, and Maine. Today its territory is vast.

Canada and Britain, besides being mutual antagonists, are natural allies when the going gets tough. And we Americans have much to share with both countries, even though we often pretend otherwise. Knowles surprisingly includes on his list that American world-traveler, Zane Grey, or at least a book about him. Likewise, he has published Charles Eliot Goodspeed's, Angling in America., which he thoughtfully sent me unbound signatures of, thinking I'd be interested. I was; it proved, for one thing, he was more knowledgeable about our literature than I was about his, for I had never heard of Goodspeed, and might have thought it a car-racing term. While not pertaining exclusively to salmon fly fishing, this largely unknown 1939 tome contains the soul and substance of fishing by every known means (seine, gaff, jig, bait, fly, etc.) in the United States. And what a privileged, motley crew we were and are. Just as we killed off the American bison and the passenger pigeon (among many other species), we did our damnedest to liquidate the entire fish population of America, as though it were the archenemy himself. There were no closed seasons or bag limits. A man killed all he could, then tried for more.

Private clubs such as the Schuykill Fishing Company set records for unprecedented slaughter. Similar to flyfishing clubs of today, they existed mainly to eat, drink heavily, and exchange deadpan lies. But the bags they brought in! Shameful, even by standards other than today's catch-and-release dictum. A man and his buddies might catch so many fish in a night (for night fishing was best) that he needed a rig to pull them all home-where I suppose most went to fertilize the garden.

Goodspeed was a historian-a pedantic and careful man who documented the past through exhaustive research and footnoting. His narrative will lead to where many of us have no urge or need to go. Yet to fish intelligently today, we must keep in mind the lessons of the past. They are largely ones of gluttony. I am grateful to Justin Knowles for pointing out to me this critical aspect of the American past. To the salmon-fly tier and fisher, parts of the book form an important historical record of material difficult to track down elsewhere, so it is all that most of us will ever know of the past we share. As the book comes closer to its date of publication, it tends to err; many books do. For instance, a number of pages are devoted to E. R. Hewitt and his Secrets of the Salmon, but where in the world is George LaBranche? He is nowhere to be found. What is needed is for someone to bring Goodspeed up to date.

A lot has happened in fifty years. I am not the one for the job. Any volunteers?

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Vol. 9 - No. 1, Winter, 1997

FROM HEAD TO TAG

Michel Fontan

Do you remember the quiz from Bill Chinn, in a previous issue of the Flyer? It was from his article titled "Who's Head is This Anyway?" (The Salmon Flyer, Vol 4, No. 2, April, 1992). We were challenged to match names of fly tiers with black and white photo close ups of salmon fly heads. Well, I must have scored a zero, and I guess I could not do - better today. Anyway the point was also to show the different styles of finishing a fly as well as to say: "hey, who said the head had to be as small as possible, as long as it is well done?".

I even heard of a no-headed fly that Steve Fernandez (who else could be so twisted to imagine and realize such a concept... Sorry Steve!!!) came up with after a challenge from Wayne Luallen, who was inspired by a story from Ed Haas, who's customer asked to do a really small head on a Fly (Ed Haas is known for his almost headless steelhead flies). We do talk a lot about the heads of our flies, but there is also two other issues I'd like to discuss at this time, the number of ribs and the length of the tag.

We all tend to take great pains to follow the "RULES" but sometimes rules are simply made to be broken. Actually, I have not yet read a book that elaborates clearly on any of these issues. The only author who mentionned the accepted number of five turns of ribbing is Pryce-Tannatt in his book How o tie Salmon Flies, and his suggestion is that the USUAL number is five, which means that this is not an absolute rule. Ham's Salmon Fishine quotes: "take the tinsel in the tweezers, and winding from left to right in spirals about 3/16 of an inch apart, carry it up to the end of the floss".

The number of ribs is often shown in illustrations but it is not clear who started the rule of five turns that we almost always follow. There are too many parameters involved to confine ourselves to that specific number of ribs.

Have you tried to tie a 9/0 fly and put only five turns of tinsel as ribs? Pretty hard to do and not very aesthetically pleasing! And what about jointed body flies - how many ribs should we put in each joint, three, four, five? If you tied a Nicholson or a Popham on a size 1/0 or 9/0, you will not have the same amount of space on each joint to play with, so lets say that you put three ribs per joint on the 1/0 and five on the 9/0, the resulting fly will still, in the end, be a Popham or a Nicholson. As a matter of fact you could even delete the ribs and still have the pattern. So what does this teach us? Your guess is as good as mine. I usually put as many ribs on the body to obtain a nice fly, taking into account their relationship with the body hackle.

What is also never really mentioned in books is where to start the tinsel, above or below the hook shank? Generally, we start it below, but some tiers start it above, especially when it comes to certain

Spey flies where we actually wrap the tinsel over and across the body hackle. Here is another issue that we have to deal with, where to start the hackle, i.e., at the butt, the second rib or farther. Should it start above or below the hook shank? In his book, *How to Tie Salmon Flies*, Hale tell us: "the hackle on a fur body should be tied in a short distance from the butt; where the second turn of ribbing will pass is the best place or, if you begin the body with a turn or two of floss silk as described above, The junction of the floss and fur is the best place". Kelson will specify for the majority of the patterns of his book The Salmon By but will also take for granted that we know this rule.

The other issue is the actual length of the tag. We pretty much agree on where to start the tag, although Kelson states in his book that the tag should start at mid point over the barb. The end of the barb's point is were our story begins but from there it becomes either a short story or a novel, depending on who's style we follow.

One of the first things to take into consideration is the type of hook you are using - Partridge's CSb, CS 10 or some hand-made hooks - Phillips, Sunday's limericks, etc. This is important because the amount of bend as well as the length of the hook shank varies a lot depending on the style of the hook, and therefore dictates to us a specific style of tying.

As for myself, I vote for a short tag, incorporating the tail and the butt into the tag's allocated space: from the point of the barb to the point of the hook. This will allow me to lower the tail as it will be tied up on the end of the bend instead of the shank. The end result might be a slender fly with little or no arch in the wing/topping. This however will not work on the Traherne style of flies where the size of the whole feathers used dictates a long and high tail in order to be able to match the toppings. But since these patterns have been written mainly by Kelson (see Paul Schmookler's Flies of Major John Pop kin Traherne) then we can shorten the tags by starting it not at the point but in the middle of the barb. And that barb can be pretty long on some hand made hooks!

So let's say that unless you are tying a specific fly, using a specific tier's style, who gives you specific directions and examples for that particular pattern, you don't have to follow the "RULES", but your own imagination!!

What it really comes down to in the end is that you are only tying for fun and that your style will tell you how big or small your head will be, how long or short your tag is and how many ribs you'll turn around the body, but in any case this should not be leading to some controversial criticism about the "authenticity" of your work.

A BLAST FROM THE PAST

Jon Harrang

Many of you are familiar with a company in Scotland specializing in antique tackle by the name of Timeless Tackle. For years this outfit was run by the notorious Jamie Maxtone Graham, but is now operated by his son, Rob. When his son took over, many items surfaced which had been buried for years, including hundreds of antique salmon flies. Although most of those old fly wallets and gut-eyed beauties were sold quickly, I did get ahold of some old small doubles in smaller sizes as well as a few larger patterns.

Almost all of the large flies were totally moth-eaten; in most cases only the bodies remained. My intention was to strip them down and re-use the hooks. Fortunately there were one or two flies which were fairly well preserved. One of them was a huge Ackroyd, probably a 7/0 or 8/0. The other fly looked unlike any salmon fly pattern I had ever seen, so I decided to try and look through my many salmon fly books in order to determine if this fly had a name. After several tedious hours of searching I came up empty. It is entirely possible that this is a known salmon fly which is recorded in a book somewhere, but to the best of my knowledge this is the first time this fly's dressing has been recorded. You heard it here first, folks.

Unnamed Antique Salmon Fly from the late 1800's

Tag: Oval gold tinsel and light yellow floss
Tail : Golden Pheasant crest
Butt: Red wool
Body : Rear Half - Flat gold tinsel ribbed with oval gold tinsel and veiled above and below with toucan, butted with red wool in front. Front Half - golden yellow floss ribbed with flat gold tinsel and gold twist.

Hackle: Yellow hackle over front half of body.
Throat: Orange hackle with orange dyed guinea fowl in front.
Underwing: grey turkey tail
Main wing: Married fibers of yellow, red and blue swan, Speckled Bustard, and Argus Pheasant, with a Golden Pheasant crest over all.
Sides: Jungle Cock and Chinese Kingfisher Horns: Blue and Yellow Macaw
Head: Black tying thread

How amazing to think that this fly pattern was almost lost to historyl It's rather miraculous that this fly didn't get destroyed by insects, while all the flies with it did, and that it was sent across the ocean to someone who actually cared about preserving antique salmon flies!

Although it is true that the dressings for most of the salmon flies in use during the 19th century never were recorded, I'm very happy that I was able to save at least one.

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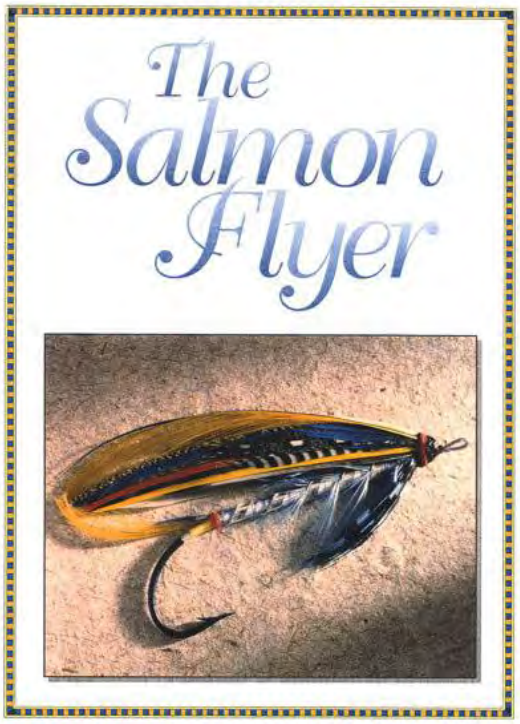
Vol. 9 - No. 2, Spring, 1997



Blue Doctor

Dressed by Johan Eriksson

Hook: 8/0
Tag: Silver tinsel and light yellow silk.
Tail: A topping and Kingfisher.
Butt: Red wool.
Body: Light blue silk.
Ribs: Flat silver tinsel and silver lace.
Hackle: Light blue from, 2nd turn of tinsel.
Throat: Guinea fowl dyed blue
Wings: Tippet in strands; married strips of smoke turkey, yellow, red and blue dyed turkey, speckled bustard, brown turkey and light mottled turkey with 2 toppings over.
Sides: Mallard and teal, guinea fowl.
Cheeks: Kingfisher
Horns: Blue and gold Macaw.
Head: Black with a thin painted line of red.

FISHING ATLANTIC SALMON - THE FLIES AND THE PATTERNS

A REVIEW

Robert C. Arnold

At the end of The Western Angler, when summing up the importance of angling and its long literary tradition, Roderick HaigBrown writes, "The making of flies for Atlantic salmon has become a high art in its own right; its traditions of workmanship and beauty demand something of the skill and devotion that were given to the making of illuminated By Bok manuscripts, and actually have almost as little practical application to the catching of salmon as beautiful illumination had to the legibility of the manuscript." (Page 167, Volume 2.) While it is possible to disagree with the back half of this wise statement, it is true enough in general and a fair assessment of the state of the art of tying-though it was written nearly 60 years ago.

Joe Bates wrote and published Atlantic Salmon Flies and Fishing in 1970 but was unhappy with the result, he told friends, and long planned to revise and expand it. Instead, in 1987, he published The Art of the Atlantic Salmon Fly, in which he dealt with the aesthetics of the flies themselves and not much with fishing for salmon. It is a wonderful book and puts on display much of his extensive collection. He had long planned a revision to the first book and made copious notes on how he would do it, along with many pages of manuscript about his experiences fishing for salmon around the world, often in the company of famous fishers. And the oddity here, and the paradox, is that Bates preferred the short rod for salmon fishing and tied exclusively (so far as we know) hair-winged patterns. He once told me that he considered them "plenty good enough" for catching fish. But his love for the full dressed patterns was unmistakable, and this new book assembled after his death puts on display more of the valuable collection, and we tyers are the better off for being able to see them lovingly and tastefully photographed by Michael Radencich-who just happens to edit this rag of ours.

The Colonel (as he liked to be called) is ably assisted by his daughter, Pamela Bates Richards and Editor/Tyer Bob Warren; John Swan's fine watercolors and drawings enhance the book throughout. The best tyers in the world have contributed unsurpassed flies, and some of the groupings are most enlightening to those of us who tie, or try to tie, flies like these. We all need to have models of excellence before us as we tie, for how else do we know whether we have succeeded or failed? Most often, our efforts fall somewhere in between: good, but not good enough. Of course we can always fish our "mistakes." And how easy it is to fool those who do not know much about our art and our folly, those who are new relatively unsophisticated in what they believe to be good flies. It is best if we ourselves are not included in this large category. Otherwise, we are doomed to mediocrity, and it is easy to achieve every other way. Those who definitely are not mediocre include Mike, Paul Schmookler, Mark Waslick, Bob Warren, Bob Veverka, and everybody else who has flies good enough to be included in the book. In a review this short, of necessity, I can only talk about it from the standpoint of tying and in viewing how flies should be tied, if they are not to fall on their faces. There is no substitute for seeing them, up close. In a couple of important instances, Mike lets us see one of his superb Jock Scotts tied in stages, from the prepared hook to the finished fly, and a bit later in the book, shows us a Blue Charm tied the same way by Editor Warren, a method of instruction I first saw done in Eric Taverner's 1948 book and, later, in Bates's The Art of the Salmon Fly, when Ted Godfrey so dressed the Baron. It is an invaluable aid in seeing how the parts of a fly are put together. In addition it carefully illustrates the relationships and proportions of these parts. And yet much of the Bates Collection by today's standards (severe, elevated, perfectionist) is ordinary, including some flies tied by the world famous. Megan Boyd does many things well ... but not always. And Bates could (excuse me) be fooled by what was less than excellent, as the 1970 book testifies and as does his extensive amassing of the Boyd flies. She could at times tie pretty awfully. But even from these flies we can learn a lot. She was, after all, a professional tyer, one who made her living from her vise. She had her good days and her bad, but she had to tie against the clock, so to speak. This makes her very different in approach to the gentle person tyers of today. Sure, we have all tied for money, but for most our so-called profits have gone back into the purchase of expensive materials. I know a first-rate tyer, here in the Pacific Northwest, who will take up to 35 hours to tie a single full-dressed fly (usually a Kelson skin or a Traherne pattern). Let's see: at a mere $20 an hour, that's $700 for the fly, not counting the materials, which might be $100 more, even if it contains no Indian crow. Who will pay that much for a fly? Anything less is a gyp, however. And I know that Steve Gobin says he can tie a Popham in forty minutes; one nearly as good in half the time. He is among the best. My point simply is this: Bates couldn't tell a good fly from a great one-probably because he didn't tie them himself. So he couldn't tell a mediocre one from a good one, either. But this isn't necessarily bad. The flies in his 1970 book encouraged me and probably hundreds of others to tie, for

we correctly believed we could tie flies that well. What I'm trying to say is that today's standards are so high only the best will see the light of public scrutiny. Hence, the famed Boyd Collection (Plates 29-32, pages 78-81) contains many disappointments. Plus a few gems. (Perhaps sunlight falling on the flies from windows in stores around the country, where the cases were displayed, faded some of the colors, as well.) I shouldn't linger on these weak points, however. Collections, say, of flies from Preston Jennings and Charles DeFeo well illustrate the evolution of salmon-fly theory and technique and are, thus, invaluable to tyers.

Among the modern tyers, there is not a bad fly in the bunch. Today's tyers are so good, they make one whistle his appreciation. And the tyers who worked in the years just behind them, such as Syd Glasso, are wisely brought forward here and shown off to a degree not previously recognized or acknowledged. I mean, I knew Syd (a friend) was good, but I didn't know he was this good. But Radencich and Warren and Richards did, and we must be grateful to them and their good taste. And of course to Joe Bates, who nourished and encouraged Glasso to tie, at a time when the salmon fly was not so highly esteemed and only a handful of people in America valued it. Bates traded rare materials for finished flies from Syd, I'm told, and it was a good bargain. If I said Bates didn't know a great fly from a merely good one, I should stand corrected in this one instance, at least. He recognized that Glasso would not be satisfied with anything less than the best from himself, and Bates trusted that keen judgment. The book proves him right and we benefit from what it contains.

Glasso tied all the William Blacker flies for The Art of the Atlantic Salmon Fly, and his international reputation rests largely on them. Locally, here in the Seattle area, we have viewed his flies over the years, particularly the original steelhead patterns that are bright variants on the Dee- and Speystyle flies. But there are many more flies, full-dressed ones, in the new book, and they are even better than before. They are lovingly photographed and made available to us, more than life-sized, by Mike's camera. Syd's flies alone are worth the book's cost, $75. But there is much else here. The book's value expands according to the needs and skills of the tyer, though I suppose it is useful and informative even to non-fishers and those who don't think of tying. Still, in how many books do we need to be told how to tie the clinch knot, the turtle, the nail knot? Surely not in this one. (If so, why not the Duncan loop knot, that is surely less common and more helpful?) And some of the digressions in the form of long-past fishing trips to far-off places seem to be included in deference to the Colonel, rather than because of any practical value. So I must conclude that part of the book (thankfully a minor part of it, yet these pages add up) are included as homage to the author and as final tribute. So be it.

Where else than in this book can one find such wise juxtapositions as, say, three Spey patterns (Carron, Lady Caroline, and Grey Heron) tied respectively by Gobin, Glasso, and Warren? The tie of the heron and the bronze mallard winging can be compared, side-by-side, and personal judgments made as to what way works best. One can see so much! Or one can observe, bigger than life, Mark Waslick's lovely The Dunt (page 225), then see the Dee stripwing ties of Gardner (Waslick), Akroyd (Glasso, but earlier there was one tied by Akroyd himself), Jock O'Dee (Glasso), Moonlight (Veverka), and Tricolor (Glasso yet again). These ties can be compared to earlier versions of the same style flies tied by P.D. Mallock (surprisingly great), Pryce-Tannatt, and numerous skilled but unknown tyers from the past. They were no amateurs.

Flies are also grouped by the NineteenthCentury writers who described them originally, in the course of their travels, such as Blacker and Francis, but as prepared by different tyers. It is interesting, then, to compare styles of tying and to see how various tyers handle, say, tags or veilings or toppings, how they set wings of different kinds, how they finish off heads (large or small or somewhere in between), how they marry strip wings, how they prepare and tie in sides, etc. Where else can one find the Bi-visibles tied by LaBranche himself, or Skaters wrapped by Hewitt, or Wulffs bushy dries, superimposed over a blackand-white photo of Wulffs scruffy fingers, wrapping without a vise?

We used to say, here in the Pacific Northwest, that Glasso was good for his day, but today's tyers surpass him. This book proves that we were wrong. We've all seen a lot of Glasso's flies, over the years, and thought we knew them all. Or I did. The best are as good as they come. They and the book that showcases them so well, and the best tyers of today, is an invaluable addition to the serious tyer's library. I used to tie from Mikael Frodin's Classic Salmon Flies, History & Patterns; I did this because so many patterns and important variants were listed, side-by-side. It was easy and pleasant to spread it open and tie madly. But-lets face it-Frodin is not the greatest tyer in the world, and this is a game of invidious comparisons. It has to be.

With the posthumous Bates book before me, there is no excuse to accept less than perfection in one's vision of what a salmon fly ought to look like, tied right. The only problem left is to do it. I think the net result of the book will be to lift the art of tying one more notch. And, alas, there will be many who fall by the wayside because of the difficulty. But there will be even more (and today there are plenty, for they seem to be proliferating geometrically each year) who will meet the challenge. And that is how it ought to work.

Short Stuff

Because the photography in Bates' book is so extraordinary and we all tie flies, I hoped Mike would pass on some of his secrets-as tyers are known to do. This is what he sent me via e-mail:

"The photography for Pam's book was done as follows: For the smaller photos I used 4 x 5 color transparency film and for the larger, full page photos I used 8 x 10 color transparency film. In all cases I used, for my light source, a large (4 ft. by 4 ft.) light box suspended above the set to provide a soft, continuous and consistent light. The light box is actually a piece of translucent Plexiglas with 3 strobe lights shining through it. The lights are enclosed in a box with one side being the Plexi. That's it. Oh, I meant to mention I used some small, white cards to reflect light back into the shadows of the flies to `open them up' a bit."

Addendum:

Alec Jackson's size 3/0 hooks have arrived from Japan. Though a bit large for my steelhead fishing, I've found they are nicely proportioned and suitable for tying Dee strip-winged flies and Speys for display. Like his other hooks, they have tiny, nicely angled eyes, which can be tied as is, or straightened out with a little heat, lopped off to the same proportions, filed down, and blind eyed with some twisted gut or gut substitute. Either way, the fly has a small head and is quite attractive

ARE THOSE FEATHERS LEGAL?

Michel Fontan

There is a serious problem for the Salmon Fly tier, beyond simply locating some specific feathers or the high price of those feathers. The problem involves the legal issues of acquiring them in the first place. Much has been said about this subject, mostly from mouth to ear, but often without accurate information, which in turn creates misinformation.

In 1966 the United States created legislation called the Endangered Species Act. Then in 1973 government agencies in various countries, under pressure from environmental groups (who were alarmed by the status of a great deal of the world's fauna and flora threatened by extinction due to human activities such as pollution, foreign trade, extermination under the guise of economical justification, greed, fashion trends, as well as simple stupidity,) decided to meet in order to establish a common legislation that would attempt to stop this decimation of species. They created laws to allow better control of commercial trade on specific species.

Since 1973, 130 countries around the world co.-signed and therefore applied to respect and enforce this mutual agreement in order to protect those endangered species. This agreement is called CITES (Convention on International Trading of Endangered Species) also known as the Washington's Convention and is the main legal document that includes the listing and specific conditions of all endangered species. This list is revised every 2 years. Those species are put into 3 different groups, depending on their status in the wild, called "ANNEXES" or "APPENDICES".

ANNEX/APPENDIX I: includes all species directly menaced by extinction. International dealing of such species is illegal and is only permitted under very strict controls for scientific purposes.

ANNEX/APPENDIX II: includes species not directly endangered, but still menaced. International trading is possible if an export license is issued by the country of departure as well as an import license from the country of arrival.

ANNEX/APPENDIX III: applied to some species in the same conditions as for ANNEX II but only when they are coming from specific countries. The Convention applied to all parts or all products coming from

any of the species (products using part of, such as a Salmon Fly) mentioned in the ANNEXES, including: live birds, skins, feathers, meat, bones, eggs. This is called a specimen.

We will be talking here about species that directly concern fly tying and more specifically species related to Classic Salmon Flies, as the patterns of the 19th Century contain a lot of such material which at the time were not protected. Also will be mentioned the more common birds and mammals and I strongly suggest that you get a copy of the Convention on your own so that you can look for more specific species. Your Bureau of Fish and Wildlife should be able to help you in that matter.

The birds and mammals of ANNEX/APPENDIX I includes: Brown bears (Ursus arctos), Seals (Monachus species-all), Eagles, Himalayan Pheasant (Catreus wallichii), Palawan Peacock Pheasant (Polyplectron emphanum) also called Napoleon Peacock Pheasant, Indian Bustard (Ardeotis nigriceps), Houbara Bustard (Chlamydotis undulata), Bengal Bustard (Eupodotis bengalensis), Hyacinth Macaw (Anodorhynchus specie), Buffon Macaw (Ara ambigua), Blue Throated Macaw (Ara glaucogularis), Scarlet Macaw (Ara macao), Military Macaw (Ara militaris), Resplendent Quetzal (Pharomachrus moccino), Banded Cotinga (Cotinga maculata).

The birds and mammals of ANNEX/APPENDIX II includes: Seals (all Arctocephalus species), Red Ibis (Eudocimus ruber), all species of Flamingoes (Phoenicopteridae), all species of raptors (Falconiformes), Argus Pheasant (Argusianus argus), Germain Peacock Pheasant (Polyplectron germaini), Hardwick/Malay Peacock Pheasant (Polyplectron malacense), Jungle Cock (Gallus sonneratii), Swan (Coscoroba coscoroba, Cygnus melanocorypha, Dendrocygna arborea) - the mute swan, used in the making of wings is not listed but is protected under some country laws- , all species of Bustards (Otididae), Ariel Toucan (Ramphastos vitellinus), Sulfur Toucan (Ramphastos sulfuratus), Cock of the rock (rupicola species), Birds of Paradise (Paradisaeidae species), all species of Macaws and Parrots.

In the ANNEX/APPENDIX III, we'll find the status of specific species in specific countries, here is a very short list of some of the more common birds: Occelated Turkey -Guatemma, Rothschild Peacock Pheasant -Malaysia.

Again, I can only stress that the list of birds is very important and that I only mentioned the more commonly used in the making of Classics. The Indian Crows and Blue Chaterrer (cotinga species) are not listed in the Convention (with the exception of the Banded Cotinga) but the trading of such species is subject to the import/export laws of local/country laws and you should be aware of those.

As an example the American legislation does not allow the importation of birds or parts of the birds coming from Guatemala, Costa Rica, the Carribeans. I mentioned international trading and therefore control of the possible damages that senseless trading can and will do to some species which is the ultimate reason of the Washington's Convention. This means that the law applies every time the specific fauna or flora is moved from one country to another. This will not apply to domestically raised fauna or flora that is legally recognized as such by a Management Authority of their state of export unless specified by a local law. Jungle Cock is raised locally in England and therefore legally sold over there as long as there is proof that they are at least of the second generation of the animals taken from the wild, that those last ones were legally imported in England and raised in an establishment legally recognized by the governmental agency. If the specimen meets all these criteria it is legal to sell it there as well as in any European country of the CEE (European's Economic Community) but you cannot bring it back freely to the US. Same for the birds raised domestically in the States as long as you don't cross the border with any specimen. This means that you won't have too much problems to obtain the legal papers to import it from England but chances are that you won't be able to from India. In case of materials that you had in your possession before 1973, the process is still the same, in view of proof of this fact, the agency will deliver you a CITES with the mention P for pre-Convention era. In any case, the domestic birds should be accompanied by a certificate established by the Management Authority in lieu of the permits required.

Herons, Swans, Geese, Kingfishers, Blue Jays .... are protected species under local/country laws that are different from one place to the other (so are Cormorans but this is another subject!!!).

As a fly tier, you probably won't bring those material from another country so you won't need to go through the legal path (use of legal import/export documents issued by the government of all countries involved, also called CITES) but the business selling you any of those materials is required to give legal proof of acquisition in order to sell it, in case of importation from a different country. Having a friend send you a Jungle Cock from India while visiting this country is a pretty bad idea and could be the beginning

of a bunch of problems with local law enforcement - including the FBI. You are also supposed to have the proper CITES when going out of the US to do a fly tying demonstration while using any of the listed material!!!!. Although there is little chance that Customs will notice what you are traveling with, be aware of the tremendous amount of legal hassle resulting in the event of serious control... penalties are very stiff! ! !

To give you an example on how it should be done: you are invited to demonstrate your tying skills at the Fly Fair in Holland and you are going to travel with the following materials: Jungle cock, Kori Bustard, Argus Pheasant... You have to go to your Bureau of Fish and Wildlife in order to obtain an export CITES which you will submit to the proper agency of Holland or the Management Authority of any country that you'll travel through and will need to clear customs. You'll need a third party in the arrival country who will apply for the import CITES which can only be issued in view of the export one. If all parties agrees and you got both of the documents with you, then you can travel and clear customs without hassle. The process should be the same if you send a Salmon Fly using any of the listed fauna to a friend abroad. Although CITES mentions that it applies to "any easily recognized" part of the listed species, customs will not hesitate to call an expert to determinate what it is that you are using. On a lighter note, here is the answer of Customs in LAX when I called them few years ago regarding the fact that I was traveling to France and back with some feathers listed in the CITES for the purpose of fly tying: As long as this is not Guns or Drugs, we won't bother (to which extent, I can't tell you!!!).

Although the respect of the legal aspect of dealing will have some impute in the pricing of such materials, there is still a huge difference between the "production" and the retail prices. From few dollars a feather (or a full skin) to the hundreds of dollars for the same feathers, we can ask ourselves what is the justification of such tremendous pricing. A Jungle cock neck in India is priced from $1 to $10 depending on the source and the grade and will retail for $125 or more in the US. The increasing demand by Fly Tyers, the GREED of some dealers and the "I NEED.." philosophy of some people created a market that dictates the actual pricing. It is sad to say but we are directly responsible for this market and accepting to pay $250 for a feather of Speckled Bustard or $1200 for a Toucan or Indian Crow skin will not help in lowering the retail prices of exotic birds. The market will be the same as long as there is a demand for it. The existence of an illegal market of endangered species is directly linked to the personal greed of some individuals and should be condemned. The laws are very tough on that subject and it is better not to become involved in dealing exotic materials unless you are very aware of all aspects of that business.

The use of Exotic materials does not improve your tying skills and the list of substitutes is big enough for everyone to find his or her happiness legally and at a much lower price.

I used the 1995 CEE's edition of the Washington's Convention as the main source for this article and the list might have been updated since then, also my translation of some of the bird names might be different from the English names, this is why I mentioned all scientific names as well. This issue of the CITES includes all the specifics applying to the European's Economic Community members. The American issue will be different in its own specifics. Any country will have its own and they can only be MORE RESTRICTIVE than the actual Convention. Also I used Paul Schmookler's book: Rare and Unusual Fly Tying Materials: a Natural History as reference for double checking some of the Bird's names. I do regret that Paul Schmookler did not mentioned the status of the birds listed in this superb book, so here it is. To the best of my knowledge:

ANNEX I:

OSTRICH, populations from almost any Northwestern and North central Africa, CALIFORNIA CONDOR, ANDEAN CONDOR, WESTERN TRAGOPAN, HYMALAYAN MONAL PHEASANT, LITTLE BUSTARD, INDIAN BUSTARD, NICOBAR PIGEON, SCARLET MACAW, RESPLENDENT QUETZAL.

ANNEX II:

SCARLET IBIS, FLAMINGO, BANDED GYMNOGENE, GOLDEN EAGLE, MERLIN, HOBBY, BAIKAL TEAL, GREY JUNGLE FOWLJUNGLE COCK, GREY PEACOCK PHEASANT, MALAYAN PEACOCK PHEASANT, GREAT ARGUS PHEASANT, GREEN PEAFOWL, GREAT BUSTARD, LUDWIG BUSTARD, ARABIAN BUSTARD, KORI BUSTARD, BLUE AND GOLD MACAW, KNYSNA TOURACO, WHITE OWL, EURASIAN EAGLE OWL, GUIANAN COCK-OFTHE-ROCK, ANDEAN COCK-OF-THE-ROCK, TWELVE-WIRED BIRD OF PARADISE, KING BIRD OF PARADISE.

ANNEX III:

EGYPTIAN GOOSE, SATYR TRAGOPAN, OCCELATED TURKEY.

For more information, you can get a copy of the actual laws on endangered species through the Internet at the following:

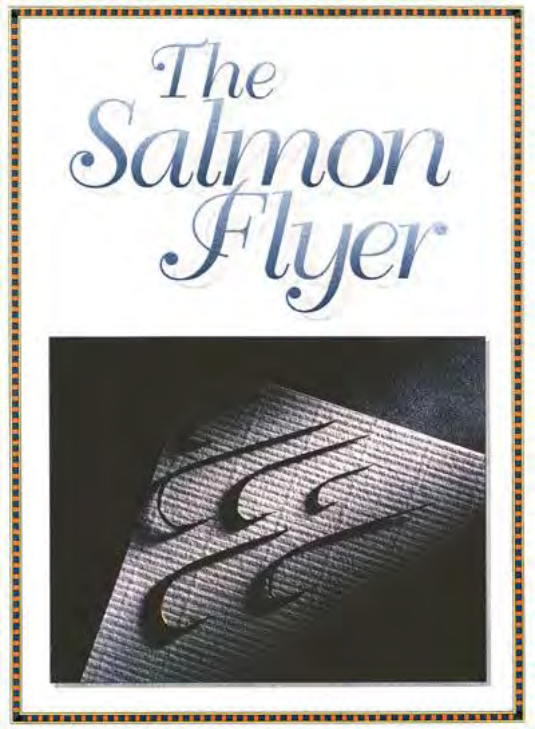
CITES (General): http://www.indirect.com/www/bazza/cites/conv.html

CITES (Specifics): <http://www.indirect.coin/www/bazza/cites/cites.html>

Endangered Species for the US as well as legislation: <http://www.fws.gov/-r9endspp/statlist.asc>

Special thanks to Wayne Luallen for his help and guidance in the making of this article.

The Salmon Flyer
Vol. 9 - No. 3, Summer, 1997



ANTIQUE CLASSIC SALMON FLY IRONS

Photo by Michael D. Radencich Copyright 1997

From top to Bottom:

Pryce-Tannatt 1 1/4" Group "C"

Harrison Bartleet #7/0 Round Bend

Pryce-Tannatt 2 1/4"

William Bartleet #4

E. Vom Hoff #4/0

William Bartleet C. 1850 #4/0 - 3/4" longer shank

A SHORT HISTORY OF THE HOOK

Andrew Herd

The hook had its origins in the gorge, a device used by many primitive cultures, which is frequently found in prehistoric sites. Gorges were made from slivers of bone, flint or turtle-shell that were attached to a line which was knotted through a hole in the centre of the gorge. The fish swallowed the gorge end first in a bait, and the pull of the line levered the gorge across the fish's throat, trapping it in place. There are many drawbacks to fishing with a gorge; it is hard to conceal, difficult to bait, hard to hook large fish on, and liable to lose its hold while the fish is being played. Despite these problems, in expert hands the gorge can prove highly effective and it is still used in some places today. We do not know for certain when the hook was discovered, although we do know that Neolithic man used hooks, making them out of bone, shell, or thorn depending on which materials were to hand. By 2000 A.D. the Egyptians were fishing with rods, lines and hooks, a level of sophistication that the Chinese would not match for a thousand years, and which other civilisations, including our own, would wait even longer to attain. The early Egyptian hooks were made of copper, and were of simple shape. There was no barb, and doubling the end of the shank over, which leaves open the possibility that these hooks may have had an eye, made the head. The length of these hooks varied from 2 to 6 cm, and the gape was wide in proportion to the length of the shank. By the XII dynasty, barbed hooks were beginning to appear, and by the XVIII dynasty, bronze barbed hooks predominated. These later hooks had the end of the shank flattened to form a wider flange, allowing the line to be attached to the shank below the flange. By Roman times, iron and bronze hooks were in use; bronze of this period being made of a harder alloy than it is today.

The first sophisticated instructions on making hooks are given in A Treatyse on Fishing with an Angle published in 1496, as part of the Second Book of St. Albans. The author explained how every article of the fly-fisher's kit should be made, including hooks, because tackle shops lay two centuries in the future. Most helpfully, the Treatyse includes a woodcut of the hooks (Fig. 1).

Although the cut gives us a general idea of the shape of fifteenth century hooks, the limitations of printing methods of the era mean that we shouldn't place too much reliance on the size or gauge of the metal used.

Here are the instructions given to the prospective hook maker:

> "You must understand that the subtlest and hardest art in making your tackle is to make your hooks, for the making of which you must have suitable files, thin and sharp and beaten small; a semi-clamp of iron; a bender; a pair of long and small tongs; a hard knife, somewhat thick; an anvil; and a little hammer. And for small fish, you must make your hooks in this manner, of the smallest square needles of steel that you can find. You must put the square needle in a red charcoal fire until it is of the same colour as the fire is. Then take it out and let it cool, and you will find it well tempered for filing. Then raise the barb with your knife and make the point sharp. Then temper it again, for otherwise it will break in the bending. Then bend it like the bend pictured hereafter as an example. And you must make greater hooks the same way out of larger needles, such as embroiderers' or tailors' or shoemakers' needles, or spear points; and of shoemakers' awls, especially, the best hooks are made for great fish. And the hooks should bend at the point when they are tested, otherwise they are not good. When the hook is bent, bend the hinder end out broad, and file it smooth to prevent fraying of your line. Then put it in the fire again, and give it an easy red heat. Then suddenly quench it in water, and it will be hard and strong."

Within fifty years, it was possible to buy hooks, although many chose to make their own. The reason for this was that commercially produced hooks were unreliable, chiefly because of uncertain temper. There was a prime opportunity for a quality bookmaker to set up shop, and one duly did; the incomparable Charles Kirby. Kirby hooks were of such good quality that the firm dominated the market during the late seventeenth and early eighteenth century, only losing its advantage when the crucible process for making steel became widely known. Kirby's great advantage was that he knew how to temper steel reliably, a secret which is said to have been passed to him by none other than Prince Rupert, Charles the First's nephew, military commander and inventor extra ordinaire. At the time, the steel for hooks came from a variety of somewhat recherche sources, including the nails from old horseshoes. Profit margins were in general extremely low, and Kirby made his money by selling a superior product at a premium price.

The problem that the hook-making industry faced was a simple technological one. Primitive blast furnaces couldn't reach more than 1,150ºC (2,100ºF), and produced "blooms" (solid lumps of the metal which included entrapped particles of slag and charcoal). Wrought iron was produced by hammering the heated blooms into shape. The exact composition of the iron produced by this method was difficult to control, and many of the early irons were brittle because they contained too much carbon. With the invention of the blast furnace, which appeared in Europe during the 15th century, it became possible to make iron on a large scale. By the middle of the 16th century, demand was such, and blast furnaces were so common, that there was a scarcity of wood for producing charcoal. The shortage became extremely pressing, but it wasn't until the early 18th century that it was discovered that coke could be used instead of charcoal. The use of iron only declined when it became possible to generate enough heat in commercial furnaces to produce steel during the mid-nineteenth century. In the interim period, steel was made on a small scale, using the crucible process, discovered in 1740. All high-quality steel was made by the crucible process until the electric furnace replaced it in the twentieth century.

Once high quality steel could be made reliably, needle and hook making became a much easier affair, and a large industry sprang up, with rival centres in Kendal, Redditch and Limerick. Kirby had lost his advantage, although the name still had considerable marketing power. Hutchinson, a needle maker, started making hooks in Kendal as early as 1745, being joined by Adlington during the midnineteenth century. By 1823, Redditch had seventeen firms of hook makers established and the Limerick hook industry had been in existence for nearly thirty years.

By the late nineteenth century, it was a routine production process. Foster, a tackle maker wrote:

> "First, then, the wire is struck off in given lengths, in accordance with the size of hook required; next, the point is formed and the shank reduced by a few strokes of the file; and next, the barb is cut by means of a large knife. All is now ready for bending, which is one of the most particular items in the construction, as the operation decides the shape, and, consequently, the particular species of hook to be produced. This is quickly done by means of a small steel block around which the wire is bent, the shape of the block varying according to the particular bend required. Now comes the final operation, viz., that of tempering. This is done in a large pan over a slow furnace. Millions of hooks are frequently tempered in one operation..."

The quality of hooks remained very variable. Faulty tempering of commercial hooks was so common that O'Gorman, a man much troubled by unreliable equipment, thought it necessary to give detailed instructions on how to re-temper hooks in an emergency. Hook making was still in part a cottage industry, with batches of needles being farmed out to families for bending. One major source of complaint was the deep cut which many hook makers used to turn up a barb. This was a common problem with Limerick bends, as well as Sneck and Kendal bent hooks, and anglers of the day became resigned to the possibility of hooks breaking off at the barb. Batch tempering wasn't a totally reliable process and fishermen became proficient at recognising soft hooks, which were light blue instead of purple blue. Japanned hooks were a different matter, and the only way of detecting a faulty one was to test it by sticking the point in a cork and putting strain on the shank.

Until the late nineteenth century, the vast majority of hooks were "blind" (i.e. they lacked an eye.) It is a curious fact that the first illustration of an eyed hook was in 1660, in Les Ruses Innocentes, by Fortin. The first English illustration of an eyed hook was in Hawker's 1760 edition of The Complete Angler, which has a plate showing a fly dressed on an eyed hook. It took one hundred and fifty years for the new invention to catch on, despite the many problems that hooks tied to gut or horsehair presented. The classical method of attaching a fly to gut was, of course, to whip the fly onto the gut. Gut was liable to wear just in front of the end of the hook, rendering the fly useless. After even short periods of storage, gut had a strong tendency to shrink or rot, resulting in the loss of the fly. Both gut and horsehair shared a common problem in that flies tied to them were hard to store, on account of the "spare" loop of line left to allow the fly to be attached to the cast. The eyed hook should have recommended itself, but for some reason it was ignored, tying to straight lengths of gut giving way instead to tying to a gut loop. The gut loop became popular in the first quarter of the eighteenth century, mostly for large flies. Smaller sizes of hook were still "tied to gut" in the traditional way. It is extraordinary how much suspicion was levelled at the eyed hook, which was denounced by O'Gorman in 1845 as 'another Scotch invention.' Even the great Kelson distrusted the eyed hook, and all his patterns were tied with gut loops. There were various attempts to market eyed hooks during the mid-nineteenth century, including Hewett-Wheatley, and Warners and Son, both of whose ventures fell by the wayside. It wasn't until H.S. Hall's eyed trout hook

came on the market in 1879 that there was any enthusiasm for a change, and that was fired by the rise in popularity of dry fly fishing, the salmon anglers being quite happy with gut loops, thank you very much. By the end of the century, up and down-eyed hooks were available in both salmon and trout sizes. A third variety of hook, sometimes called "needle-eyed" was also available, with a hole drilled perpendicularly through the end of the hook shank, but the design was flawed and failed to attract a following.

In the transition period between blind and eyed hooks, some peculiar experiments were carried out. For a time in the nineteen-thirties an odd practice of whipping metal eyes to a class of long shanked hook (known as Long Dees) was followed on Deeside. It appears that the reason for doing so was that the hooks in question were markedly hog-backed, and the habit of whipping on an eye was necessary to improve the line of pull on the hook, but fortunately the habit and the hooks died out! Incredibly, blind hooks were still being manufactured in the 1930s, prompting Taverner to write:

> "There is still a school of anglers who prefer their salmon-flies dressed on gut-loops, because they maintain there is less strain on the cast through having an elastic joint between metal and single gut. I think this is distinctly the better argument in support of the gut-loop, but I do not recommend it in preference to the well-designed metal eye, except for large flies (3/0 upwards) and for fishing in a strong and gusty wind."

If old hooks were finished at all, they were blued. The practice began to die out in the last quarter on the nineteenth century, at which time hooks were being finished by coating them in enamel (usually black, but red, green, blue and yellow were available from Allcock & Co. of Redditch in the 1880s) or in a few cases, such as H. S. Hall's post 1885 hooks, by bronzing. The major problem with bluing was that hooks treated that way rusted very easily. For a short time there was a vogue for silver and even goldplating hooks, but the expense and the flashiness of the finished product were sufficient to ensure that it didn't catch on.

The large-scale manufacture of hooks in the early nineteenth century brought a new problem for the fisherman; one of comparing different firm's hook sizes. The confusion started in the nineteenth century, when a number of competing scales sprung up. There were various Redditch scales in use, Stoddart quotes one that ran from 1 to 16, with 16 the smallest. 1 - 7 were salmon sizes, 8 - 16 were trout sizes. The unified Redditch 'old' scale ran from 1 to 19, with 1 the smallest trout size, and 19 the largest salmon size. Shipley's Redditch hooks were longer in the shank than the Kendals, a measurement problem that still affects hooks today. Many round bend hooks were sized on a scale that ran from 00 (midge) to 20 (the largest salmon). At one time there were at least five different hook scale systems in operation: Carlisle, Kendal, O'Shaughnessy Limerick, Dublin (or Philips) Limerick, and Sell of Dublin. The confusion can only be imagined! The growing popularity of eyed hooks in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century only made matters worse. As late as 1933, Taverner made a heartfelt plea for a solution to the chaos in the system of hook numbering:

> "Hooks are still sold without any attention being paid to a standard of length; the No. 1 hook, for example, of one manufacturer is equal to the No. 0 or No. 2 of others. Limericks are always a size larger than their corresponding number in other makes. And in spite of many attempts outside the trade and one or two inside it there remains to this day a hopeless confusion of numbering, because there is no unit of length to which size has a definite relation."

If the problem of deriving a common reference scale for hook sizes taxed many good minds in the past; it continues to do so. Various methods of - hook measurement can be used: the overall length, the length of the straight part of the shank and width of the gape to name but three. All have their problems that relate to the different proportions each manufacturer gives to their series of hooks. The ratio between width of gape and length of shank varies widely between different lines. Overall length is the easiest to measure, but the different dimensions of the bend of a Limerick and say a Sneck bend would result in two hooks with very different lengths of shank being classified as the same size. Then again, many blind hooks were made intentionally long in the shank so that they could be cut to size by the tier. When eyed hooks appeared on the market, the diameter of eyes had to be taken into account, as eye size could make a major difference to the length of a small hook. There were a few brave attempts to produce standard hook scales, notably by Cholmondely-Pennel in the late 1880's, and by Pryce-Tannatt in 1914. Pennel's scale (running from the smallest, 000 to the largest, 19) was available until at least the beginning of the Second World War, but Pryce-Tannatt's did not last.

Hook scales	Sizes (small to large)
Carlisle	12 or small midge,11 or middle midge,10 or large midge,9 or small fly,8 or middle fly,7 or large fly,6 or small cod-bait,5 or middle cod-bait,4 or large cod-bait,3 or small worm,2 or middle worm,1 or large worm, small grilse, middle grilse, large grilse, small salmon, middle salmon, large salmon
Redditch "new"	18,17,16,15,14,13,12,11,10,9,8,7,6,5,4,3,2,1,0,2/0,3/0,4/0,5/0,6/0,7/0, 8/0, 9/0, 10/0 (Good illustration p 464 of Kelson)
Redditch "old"	13,12,11,10,9,8,7,6,5,4,3,2,1
Redditch (1830)	12,11,10,9,8,7,6,5,4,3,2,1,0,00
Adlington	00,0,1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9,10,11,12,13,14,15,16,17,18,19,20
Kendal (1830)	000,00,0,1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9,10,11,1213,14,15
Pennell	000,00,0,1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9,10,11,12,13,14,15,16,17,18,19
H. S. Hall series	000,00,0,1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9,10
Sell	(Trout) 8,7,6,5,4,3,2,1 (Grilse) 4,3,2,1 (Salmon) 6,5,4,3,2,1
Philips	midge, fe, f, ff, fff, C, CC, B, BB, 9, 8, 7, 6, 5, 4
O'Shaughnessy	(Trout) 9,8,7,6,5,4,3,2,1 (Grilse) 4,3,2,1 (Salmon) 6,5,4,3,2,1
Limerick "rational" scale	000,00,0,1,2,3,4, 4½, 5, 5½, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 11½, 12, 13, 13½, 14, 14½, 15, 16, 17, 18, 18½, 19, 20, 21

Figure 2: Different Hook Scales Compared

Modern systems concentrate on standardising the length of the shank, but this is a difficult measurement to make of a hog-backed hook, and differences in bend and eye diameter may conspire to make a small hook appear larger than its official size. No system can take account of hooks that are classified differently by custom, for example long shank trout hooks, which take their size from the gape of the hook, rather than the length of the shank. Consider the unofficial extension of the current system of measurement to account for sizes below size 16, and we are only marginally in advance of the chaos of the nineteenth century. As long as different makers continue to produce different patterns of hook, we are unlikely to see any improvement.

We have talked of single hooks until now, but the double salmon hook is a reasonably mature invention, given that the bronze age Swiss used them extensively. As usual, English fishermen treated such an innovation with extreme caution; the first mention of a double salmon hook in the literature being in 1590. Venables discussed flies tied on double hooks (set at an angle of 90º) for catching grilse and grayling, but the double hook didn't catch on overnight, and it was 1689 before one was illustrated and doubles didn't become truly popular until much later. Early double hooks were whipped together, but later versions were made by braising the metal. Cholmondely-Pennell designed and marketed a series of double hooks in the 1880's, by which time the idea was no longer regarded as dangerously novel.

Treble hooks share the chequered history of their cousins. They had little application in fly fishing until the twentieth century, mainly being used for live and dead baiting. By the late nineteenth century, trebles were also being used for spinning, and were a source of much complaint. Hooks frequently broke, the temper having been affected during the brazing procedure. The trouble was caused by the selection of wire that was of too fine a diameter, and which became extremely brittle during the manufacturing process. It would not be until after the Second World War that trebles came into widespread use for fly fishing, as it was only then that it became possible to manufacture hooks reliably in the small sizes required. If Redditch had a serious rival, it was the Irish hook makers. The use of Irish products was de rigeur among salmon fishermen in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. The O'Shaughnessy family was the foremost firm of Limerick hook makers, establishing their business in 1795. They soon developed a formidable reputation for quality, their products costing sixpence a dozen and being recommended as a matter of course by eighteenth nineteenth century authors. The original O'Shaughnessy hooks were hammered out and forged, with the barbs filed out from the metal rather than being cut out and bent up as was the case with wire hooks. The founder died in about 1820 and by 1834 the business had been taken over by a watchmaker, who had carried on the tackle making business, turning out Limerick hooks after the original O'Shaughnessy pattern. O'Shaughnessy's son was also a hook maker, but was employed by a man called Glover, having lost the family business, perhaps because of his fondness for alcohol.

Sell's			O'Shaughnessey's			Phillip's		
Salmon			*Salmon*			*Salmon*		
No	in.	16ths	No	in.	16ths	No	in.	16ths
1 measures	2	12	1 measures	2	4			
2	2	10	2	1	15	4[1]		
3	2	5	3	1	13	5[1]		
4	2	3	4	1	8	6.....	2	4
5.....	1	15	5.....	1	7	7.....	1	14
6.....	1	14	6.....	1	5	8.....	1	12
7.....	1	10				9.....	1	7
Grilse			*Grilse*			*Grilse*		
1.....	1	7	1.....	1	3	BB.....	1	2
2.....	1	5	2.....	1	0	B.....	1	0
3.....	1	4	3.....	0	15	CC.....	0	14
4.....	0	15	4.....	0	14	C.....	0	12
Trout			*Trout*			*Trout*		
1.....	0	12	1.....	0	10	fff.....	0	10
2.....	0	to	2.....	0		ff.....	0	8
3.....	0		3.....	0	to	f.....	0	7
4.....	0	6	4.....	0		fe.....	0	6
5.....	0		5.....	0	6	Midge.....	0	5½
6.....	0	to	6.....	0				
7.....	0		7.....	0	to			
8 midge	0	5	8.....	0				
			9 midge	0	5			

[1] Added from *The Book of the Salmon*, Ephemera, 1850. Nb. that Fitzgibbon describes the Phillip's "C" hook as "CC (small)" and renumbers the hooks for the convenience of his own readers.

Figure 3: The Irish hook maker's scales compared (Adapted from The Fly Fisher's Text Book, Chitty)

When Belton visited Limerick in 1834 he was able to see hooks being made using a process that had altered little in three and a half centuries:

> "...I was shown the hooks in all their several stages of manufacture. They are at first small straight bars of the very best iron, and of the requisite length, with a kind of rude head at one end. They alf the re first barbed, sharpened and rounded by the file, then bent with circular pincers to the proper degree of curvature: next they are steeled by the application of fire and charcoal, and then, after a little final polishing, are placed on a smoothing iron, heated to 580 degrees of Fahrenheit, which gives them the blue colour and temper; and are, lastly, immersed in grease, to prevent them from rust. In point of quality, 1 think there is little difference between them, and Kelly's of Dublin: but, in consequence of their forming a somewhat larger curve, and projecting more than his, they are more certain to strike the fish; while, for the same reason, they do not admit of equally neat tying. They are all of them, h o w e v e r, incomparably superior to the best London hooks, and are the only ones to be depended upon for large fish; but they are dear."

They certainly were dear: by 1845 a dozen cost between four shillings and one shilling. But the angler got a hook filed from best German steel, rather than the wire hooks that were the rule from Dublin and London firms. By comparison, Sell's hooks cost between three shillings and nine pence a dozen. O'Shaughnessy hooks were so prized that it was common practice to strip the fly from the hook after it had been mauled by fish: not only did the hooks last forever, they were simply too valuable to throw away! The quality of the Limerick products stood head and shoulders above those of their competitors. There were three sources of Limerick hooks: Philips of Dublin, whose products had a pronounced intoeing of the bend, so that the point aimed in towards the shank; and Sell and O'Shaughnessy whose products showed less intoeing (see Chitty illus p42). Most writers of the day favoured the Sell and O'Shaughnessy hooks because they were less prone to failure.

HANDMADE HOOKS - THIS IS MY WAY!

Henrik Strandgaard

Some 8-10 years have passed since I became interested in tying classic Atlantic salmon flies.

Looking back on those early days of my interest, my immediate thoughts fall on the difficulties associated with procuring materials; not just some of the genuine and very rare materials, but any material - even good substitutes.

To you guys and gals - the readers of the Flyer - who are all (but a few) Americans, it might seem amusing, but in Europe you couldn't get anything in those days! It took me a great deal of time to get hold of my first genuine pair of black barred woodduck - not to mention the price: the equivalence of 4-5 US$ per pair - yeerkk! !

Today the demand for such materials have brought forth a lot of quality stuff and although prices have gone through the roof due to the fact that we are all - more or less -a greedy bunch of material stowers, you can at lest get hold of the stuff. Looking back at these first years in tying classic flies I now realize that I too got possessed by collecting and stowing away - even though I had or have materials for many years of tying it just never seemed to be enough, I became immune to prices. How many people (except for the guys you know on the FLYER roster) do you know of that are prepared to pay 300$ for one lousy pair of feathers?

If you are possessed by original materials anything can be had if you are willing to pay the price for it. As time passed and my collection grew, I realized that something was missing: Hooks! The blind eye salmon iron is the backbone of the classic fully dressed salmon fly - without it you can forget about your nice materials!!

At the time when I started no such hooks were available on the market - or at least that I knew of. Some fly tyers and among them many Scandinavians had the habit. of buying up old antique flies and stripping them for the blind eye hook. In my opinion a VERY sickening idea!! These old flies constitute a heritage which we are obliged to protect, no matter the material state of these flies.

Then during a visit to the Partridge of Redditch factory in England I saw a series of blind eye hooks type Adlington & Hutchinson which they had just started to produce. My eyes went wild and I immediately bought up a large stock - a stock that would last me well into the 21st century! No offence to Partridge - the hooks were essentially OK and did well for a couple of years until they were more or less thrown out - sorry Alan!

However, as my interest in tying these flies grew and 1 really got into correspondence with tyers from the US I found out that there were a few dedicated guys who manufactured hand made hooks for a small but growing group of seriously interested fly tyers. It didn't take long to track and get through to some of these and eventually I did get hold of some very nice contemporary hand made hooks - hooks of a very high quality.

Amateur hook makers such as Ray Smith and Eugene Sunday are already "legends" of the craft and have become known also here in Denmark. Contemporary Hand made blind eye salmon irons are characterized by their beautiful styles and characteristics - very fine reproductions of well-known antique hooks of different make and origin. Because of this and the ever increasing demand the prizes are naturally of course quite high, around 10$ per hook. A prize that can be accepted, but as they were retailed in Denmark by a certain retailer who felt he should profit even more, they were sold for somewhere between 20 and 40$, making them accessible to only a handful of very dedicated ($$$) tyers! Because of these circumstances one question eventually forms in your mind: What can these guys do that I can't do - and furthermore at 10 bucks a piece?

That's exactly the thought that struck me. At the same time I was corresponding with Mark Kirchner of California, who as some of you maybe know, is a very competent but non-commercial hook maker. Mark suggested that I started making my own hooks and wrote me page upon page on do-it-yourself hook-making. Mark even sent me a two hour cassette tape on the A-Z of hook making!!

Steel and Barbs:

To begin with I must convince my fellows in the art of fly tying that the art of hook making requires no skills what so ever. In essence there are only two (minor) real problems that must be overcome : Where do you get the right steel or thread and how do you cut the barb?

Since long I have learned that most, if not all, of the contemporary hook makers in the US and elsewhere don't really produce hooks from scratch it- they reshape from existing hooks. That's also what Mark taught me in the beginning, but I wanted to make hooks all the way! So, if you want to stick to reshaping write me or Mark (which I am shure Mark won't mind) for a copy of the "A-Z on hook-making" auto tape and stop reading here. If on the other hand you want to start from scratch as I did then: Let's get to it!

Hooks are traditionally made out of carbon steel wire or thread, although some (O'Shaugnessy was the most famous) were filed from stock bars. At the extreme, an intermediary hook of oval wire was patented by Hardy of Alwick early in the 20th. century. Don't stick to bothering about carbon percentages; whether it's one or the other doesn't really matter as long as you don't need the hooks for fishing and thus need to harden and temper for maximum breaking strength. You need temper-able steel, and as far as I know that's a carbon of around 60 %. Carbon steel wire can be procured in virtually all kinds of diameters, but a range of diameters between 0.8 and 1.70 millimeters will cover hook sizes from 4 up to 7/0. Don't know what wire to use for what size? Take a look on the back of a pack of Partridge hooks and you will find some valuable information to start on.

Bearding or barbing can be difficult to do in the beginning. To be able to do this consistently you will eventually need a specialized tool, but mind you: it doesn't necessarily have to be a real sophisticated tool. Essentially all it must be able to do is "slice" into the thread or wire without breaking or "chipping". A chisel or knife can easily be made out of hard tool steel - the best thing you can do is customize an old metal file or heavy duty saw blade. In the beginning I started with a simple toolmaker's chisel set into a wooden block by a slight angle. As I have a very short patience with stone-age type tools, I asked a friend and fellow fly fisher who is also a tool maker to try and design the same kind of tool in steel. Eventually he came up with the "barbing tool" which to date have produced some 1000 barbs with virtually no problems. Then a couple of years ago at the Fly Show in Elverum, Norway, I saw a Mustad hook maker produce hooks on some of Mustads antique machinery. The bearding knife they had, which dated back almost a hundred years, was much easier to use, so I took some "spy" photographs of it. At the time of writing my toolmaker is working on a copy of this particular instrument.

The most important thing to keep in mind when working on a bearding tool or knife is the angle of the knife or chisel to the thread or wire, as well as the angle of the blade. This angle has to be custom fitted to the individual tool to produce the right "bite" thus producing a barb and not a peal like when you peal a potato. REMEMBER that any cutting problem will eventually stem from a misfit of one or both of these angles and not from the material, tool, etc. A particular problem during barbing, is the formation of a "curly" barb. Gary Kaplan of San Francisco, being a "retired" furniture maker, taught me that the cutting of the barb in steel wire is no different from planing a piece of wood. My curly barbs were converted to straight even barbs by hollowing the blade thus preventing the barb to curl of against the blade when the blade reaches deep.

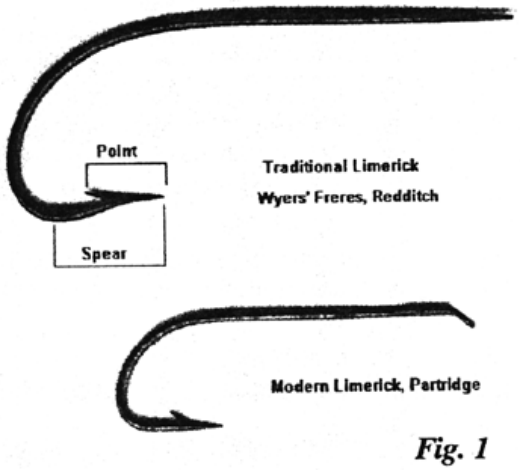


Fig. 1

Some terminology: (Correct me if I am wrong) The point of the hook is the part that protrudes forward from the shoulder of the barb (see Figure 1). The spear is somewhat more obscure, but essentially the lower or outer part where the bend comes up to the barb including the barb and point.

In my opinion the point or more important the spear is the soul of the hook. The spear gives the hook its final character - a bad spear, a bad hook! Modern hooks are ALL machine filed (no matter how "handmade" the makers may say they are), therefore the point can only be either rounded (like Partridges) or triangular knife edged (like Mustads new 80000 series).In the old days all hooks were hand filed, mostly half oval, that is - only the top and sides were filed, never the keel. So it was written - so it shall be done!

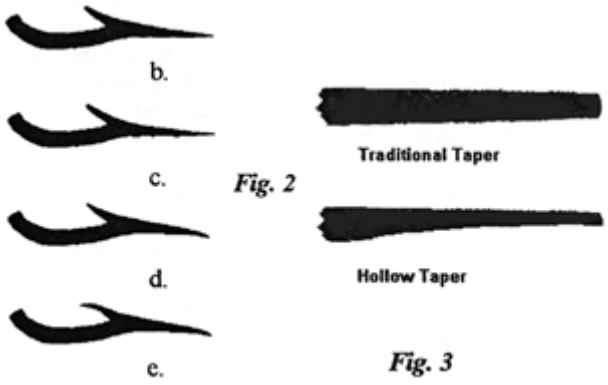


Fig. 2

Fig. 3

You don't need sophisticated files or tools, a handful of watch makers files and an old clamp or an out-phased fly tying vice is fine. I have found that one of my old fly tying vices serve the purpose well. Begin by filing the sides of the point from the neck of the barb towards the point. I have found that a large and heavy 20" flat file is best for this rough work even on very small hooks, but you may start with a finer tool. Now, interrupt the filing and think about the shape of the point you want to achieve. Look at the underside only. Remember that whatever bend the point needs from the barb and out cannot be produced by the final bending of the hook on a template. Take a look at Figures 2b - 2e for different point shapes. You will need to bend whatever shape you chose into the point now by use of a fine pair of double round or oval pliers, anything else will a nick in the wire. I use pliers with nylon-coated jaws for "no-nick bends". Be careful not to bend just under the barb, a bend here will lift the barb so that it stands too high.

When the point has been filed on the sides to produce a sharp point and bent into shape you start filing the top or saddle. I have found that at this point people find their own style and method to suit them and the results they want to achieve. The trick is to develop a routine and remember this routine for all your filing. I use only a fine round watchmakers file without handle to file from now on. Start by planing the neck or protrusion of the barb so that there is no levelling or border between this and the flat of the sides. Take it easy on the top, because you will soon have overdone it! Always file from the barb towards the point and angle the file so that you file down on the sides. When you have produced a "rough" point take a look at the result, the length is important, you might want to compare it with a hook you want to reproduce. Don't leave the top of the barb unfiled - try to create a perfect saddle that is a continuous flat S-curve from top of the barb all the way to the point. It takes some time and practise to get the feeling - and a couple of dozens to get the same product every time, but as soon as it becomes routine you should be able to repeat the same point over and over again. When the spear has reached a point of satisfaction I prefer to polish it with fine polishing/sanding paper (the diamond kind) or a small Carborundum-rubber polishing wheel fitted on an electric drill. Look for small plier pinch marks etc. These don't look good after the final paint is on!

If you study old antique hooks you will notice that on many or most the cut behind the barb has been extended unto the sides of the point. In fact I have noticed that this detail rarely applies to both sides but mostly to the right side. This was probably dependent on whether the filer/maker was right or left handed. This effect is one of the very sought after qualities in contemporary classic hooks and you probably like it too. The effect can be attained by cutting from under the barb and out and down unto the sides of the barb with a knife or sharp one edged file. I use a very sharp pyramid shaped file where only the base has a filing surface. Such can be easily bought but often need a little custom sharpening on a grinding machine. It is important to get all the way in behind the barb so that the cut becomes a natural part of the cut of the barb. Be careful, only one or two strokes with the file will produce the wanted effect.

The shank tapering can be filed on a machine or sanding bench. I used to round it down, but I rather like to taper the underside to get a flat seating for the gut loop ends (see Fig. 3). You may also cut a few cuts across the shank for extra gut loop holding power.

Bends and Bending:

There is much reading to be had on hooks and different shapes of hooks in books, catalogs etc. At the end of this article the reader will find reference to some of the most interesting sources. Today as well as in the old days there is a wide variety of different designs available and as it will be possible to explain just a little bit about the subject here I will stick to one design only: the Limerick style of bend.

In my opinion THE classic salmon fly hook is per definition the Limerick hook. Take a look at the hook plates/photos in Taverners book. Tell me of someone who can explain exactly what a Limerick hook looks like and I'll give him 100 bucks without blinking! YES - it is a good question! Figure 1. shows two hooks - a traditional antique Limerick together with the modern Limerick we know today.

The only certain thing we can say about the name Limerick is that it's a town in Ireland! Limerick is also the term or name for a particular hook type or bend design, not a particular maker or product. In short and rough terms the Limerick hook style is characterized by a bend that follows an almost exponential curve from where the bend starts at some point behind the barb to where it becomes the straight shank. Most modern limerick hooks have a straight spear from the point all the way back to the back of the hook - where the bend starts to curve upwards. In classic Limericks the bend from the shank side becomes a circular bend which again curves the point upwards and in towards the shank. The transition from bend into shank could be very long (so-called hog backs). Contrary to what most people think, the weakest point of the hook is just at the point where the curve of the bend enters the shank. The hog back type Limericks were extremely strong because the transition between the curve of the bend and the shank is almost non-existing, thus distributing the pressure over as large a surface as possible. That is why the modern Bartleet type hooks are actually much stronger than the thin, light wire immediately leads you to believe.

The bending of the hook is in principle quite easy. In the old days the hook makers or needle factories used to send out the pointed and filed pins to families in town, where the kids would then sit and bend the pins into shaped and half finished hooks. To be able to do the same job you actually only need a pair of pliers. Pliers have a great disadvantage though; you cannot bend the wire with pliers without leaving the bend full of nicks and marks. Often you can see angles in a bend that should be curving and that looks bad.

The tool that was used back then was a simple preshaped piece of flat steel or iron plate set into a wooden block together with a small pin to direct the position of the barb and hold the wire while bending. In modern hook making this tool - the template - consists of a steel block cut to shape that may bend from 1 to as much as 100 hooks at a time.

I use such a template cut and filed into shape out of a block of aluminium bar stock (see Fig. 4). The advantage of using this method compared to bending a flat piece of steel into shape and trying to center it in a wooden block is obvious. Using an aluminium block gives you the advantage of being able to file on and on until you reach the right shape. Often you need to over bend the wire to get the exact hook shape - depending on the hardness of the wire you use; this is the only trouble you will encounter, but nevertheless it can be quite time consuming. No advice can be offered because we will never use the same steel - so just keep filing! Eventually you will learn that the "overbend" will be most apparent from the last part of the bend through to the shank. Oh, just one little piece of advice: If you move to a new wire stock or different maker, the softness of the wire will be different - and so, you'll have start all over again with filing templates!

The template is fastened to a wooden or iron block together with a small steering pin to direct and hold the point while bending. This pin must be placed in an exact and fixed position under the point. Lots of experience has taught me that the position of the steering pin is THE critical factor that will in the end determine the final shape of the hook and the direction of the point. As soon as you have a rough template that you want to continue with you should therefore fasten it in a fixed position on the block with the pin fixed in position as well. If you don't do this you will eventually end up filing in a whole lot of different places on the template, never really getting the right result simply because you move the pin around. If you are smart, you fix the pin on a rotating screw so that you can move it a few millimeters back and forth as well as up and down, by doing so you get the opportunity to be able to create different

hook shapes on the same template! Finally remember that you may adjust the bend of the finished hook with a pair of pliers, but be careful and use the kind that has nylon jaws that don't make marks!

Hardening and tempering:

Essentially now the hook is finished and needs only to receive it's final strength through hardening and tempering followed by a coat of finish. Before applying heat to the hook it's a good idea to degrease in some form because any grease on the steel will burn and leave black shells on the surface that can be time consuming to remove.

Before divulging into the science of hardening you should know that unless you need strong fishable hooks it doesn't really matter much with critical temperatures. The hardening process itself means heating the steel until reaching its critical temperature followed by rapid cooling. The critical temperature is dependent on the composition and the carbon content of the steel. It can be found in two ways. One is by holding a small magnet to the steel while heating. As soon as the hook reaches a point where there is no magnetic adherence or attraction the critical temperature has been reached. This is the rather inconvenient approach. The second way is to know the hardening color of your type of steel and then judge the heating and temperature by the color changes of the hook. Most temper-able carbon steels will harden somewhere around 800 - 1000 degrees Celsius corresponding to the colors blood red to medium orange. Upon reaching the desired temperature or color, quickly submerge the hook into ice water or cooled oil. It should be of little importance what cooling agent you use, but I advice you to use oil since I have seen some problems with tempering after cooling in water. Oil has the advantage that it will penetrate the steel to some degree and therefore protect the hook later. In general ice water produces the most hard as well as most brittle hardening. Oils produce softer hardenings.

Having heated the hook to extreme temperature and maybe submerged it in oil or water you need to perform a final degreasing before you venture into lacquering or japanning the hook. First remove the coal shell from the hook by a light polish with fine soft sanding paper or steel wool - I prefer steel wool, because it gets into the corners, but it tends to stick to your fingers and create a one-week itch all over your hands! I keep returning to the smart stuff, so here's another: Make yourself a small barrel 10 x 5 inches and join it to a small toy engine for rotation. Fill it half up with fine sand and rotate the hooks in it for half a day - they come out as polished silverware! Then remove the last grease by use of acid. I use concentrated phosphoric acid that is a very powerful acid, so mind you it works just as fine on exposed skin as it does on steel! The acid removes grease and at the same time it created a rough surface (not visible to the human eye) that helps bind the paint that will be applied later. Acid treatment time varies with concentration of acid and thickness of wire but by using the concentrated acid I seldom treat large hooks for more than 20 minutes, the process is easy to follow. From now on DO NOT TOUCH the hook with anything like greasy fingers!!

Following hardening and acid treatment the hook is brittle and will break if bent or dropped on a hard floor. To achieve the right softness or strength the hook has to be tempered. This is usually (again depending on the type of steel etc.) achieved by heating to approximately 250-280 degrees Celsius that can be done in a normal household oven. I temper at 250 degrees followed by a slow cool-down. During tempering the hook should achieve a bluish to brown-yellow color - this was the final color of older antique hooks that were not japanned.

Black Japanning:

The paint, lacquer or black Japanning protects the hook from rust and produces a desired finish. Japanning is a term used for applying a special black lacquer to metal or hooks (or other items). Today no hook factory uses the same method and we cannot expect them to reveal their secrets. To achieve the point of having a perfect finish for hooks is somewhat of a challenge and it is still one of the details upon which I have not been able to produce a fully satisfactory result.

The method of black Japanning originated from Japan. Originally the black lacquered surfaces were produced with the raw sap from the trunk of the lacquer tree of Manchuria. This semi-milky sap has a colorless, transparent and almost opaque color that is easily blended with a fine powder to produce a colored substance. This lacquer produces extremely beautiful and long lasting surfaces achieved through numerous coats only. It has many disadvantages (but as the Japanese Zen artists were born sufferers, no problem was too big to overcome), first it was EXTREMELY hazardous to your health and second: it took weeks if not months to dry. If this lacquer was needed for cane rods I can assure you that Garrison and Payne wouldn't have been in business, ever! The drying process - in between each

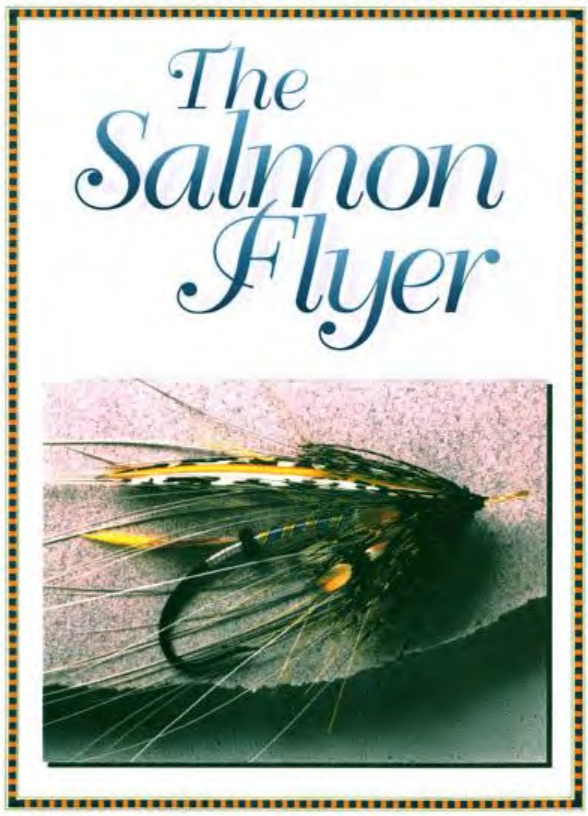
coat - took place in the only dust free environment known to nature: at sea! The artist or craftsmen bore their products on board fishing vessels that were bound for weeks of fishing far from land, while they worked as deck hands. A properly lacquered box without chips in the surface can sell for as much as several hundred thousand dollars today.

Later, in the 19th century, copies of this lacquer became popular and were used for black Japanning of all kinds of stuff from motor engines to fly boxes and hooks. All these lacquers or varnishes were complicated natural mixtures on a turpentine base; un-reproducible today unless you come across the archives of a 19th century paint or varnish factory! A friendly call to Partidge of Redditch production manager Terry Emms revealed that the old recipe for black Japanning had long since been lost and that today's modern hooks are black "Japanned" with common black stoving enamels.

The hard part in painting hooks is getting the paint - let's call it varnish from now on! - to stay on the steel. NO varnish (except epoxy) will do so on a smooth or polished surface. That's where the phosphoric acid treatment comes in. So far I have come up with a handful of varnishes (actually paint!) that produces good results. There is no point in mentioning the names here because they are not available in the US. However they are all spray can paints that are heat resistant up to around 500 degrees Celsius. Because of the heat resistance you can then harden the coat by re-tempering the hook. Be shure to do this at a lower temperature than the one you used for tempering. A US suggestion regarding a good coat is to use the brand Rustoleum that was recommended to me by Mark Kirchner. I have no experience with it myself as it cannot be bought in Europe, but judging from Marks hooks it looks and feels good.

That concludes my story on hook making. I can only recommend any salmon fly tyer to try it out; it is not as difficult as it sounds! As long as you use a rational approach you may eventually solve any little problem that comes along, else revert to conferring with any of the growing number of fly tyers who is into this as deep as you are.

The Salmon Flyer
Vol. 9 - No. 4, Autumn, 1997



The Bopp-Hale

Designed and dressed by Michel Fontan

Tag: Silver tinsel, white silk with a few strands of think and light blue wound with it.
Tail: A topping and purple cotinga (throat feather of the blue chatterer).
Body: First half of pale blue silk, ribbed with yellow silk, gold and silver tinsel along either side of the yellow silk; second half of cream, light blue and light pink angora goat, well mixed and picked out, ribbed with silver lace.
Hackle: A topping over the goat, wound like a normal hackle.
Throat: Grey heron.
Wings : Argus pheasant, white and like green dyed turkey, scarlet macaw, peacock and Amherst pheasant.
Cheeks: Indian crow.
Collar: Malay peacock pheasant body feather.
Head: Grey ostrich herl.

EVOLUTION OF THE SALMON FLY

Andrew Herd

We do not know when the first salmon fly was tied, although it is sensible to imagine that as long as fishermen have angled for trout, they must have caught the occasional salmon. The earliest actual reference we have to catching salmon on a fly is in the Treatyse on Fishing with an Angle, published in 1496. A great deal of skill and luck would have been needed to hook and kill a fish in those days, given that the line was fixed to the top of the rod, and that casting distances were limited.

We have to wait another two and a half centuries before we get a clue about how early salmon flies were tied. In 1651, Thomas Barker, a friend of Walton's, wrote cautiously:

"If you will angle for him with a flie (which he will rise at like a trout) the flie must be made of a large hook, which hook must carry six wings, or four at the least; there is judgement in making those flyes."

It is frustrating that he said nothing about the materials used to tie a salmon fly, but his contemporary, Franck, was a salmon fisherman, and he gave us everything short of specific patterns:

"For that end let me advise you, that the ground of your fly be for the most part obscure, of a gloomy, dark and dusky complexion; fashioned with tofts of bears-hair, blackish or brownish discolour'd wool, interwoven sometimes with peacock's feathers, at otherwhiles lap'd about with grey, red, yellow, green, or blewish silk simple colours, or colours sometimes intermingled. For instance, black and yellow represent the wasp or hornet, and a promiscuous brown the flesh fly; and so the rest.

"And among the variety of your fly-adventurers, remember the hackle, or the fly-substitute, form'd without wings, and drest up with the feather of a capon, pheasant, partridg, moccaw, phlimingo, paraketa, or the like and the body differing nothing in shape from the fly, save only in ruffness and indigency of wings. Another necessary observation, is the wing of your fly, which ought to proceed from the teal, heron, malard, or faucon. The pinion and wing thereof ought to lie close, and so snug as to carry the point exactly downward."

Frances text tallies with Walton, who mentioned the salmon fly only once, whetting his readers' appetite with a brief observation that it might be made with the "red feathers of a Parakita, a strange outlandish bird; and he will rise at a fly not unlike a gnat or a small moth, or indeed at most flies that are not big." Flamingo, parakeet and macaw might seem to be rather exotic materials for a seventeenth century angler to tote in his dubbing bag, but trade in feathers had been established since the mid sixteenth century as a result of popular demand for ladies' hat making. Franck would have been able to acquire exotic feathers relatively easily in England. Unlike the majority of his countrymen, he had travelled far abroad, and the title page of two of his books tell us that they were written in America. It is pure speculation, but the verbose Roundhead may have been the first man to fish the fly in the New World.

The last of the early authors who have anything to tell us is Colonel Venables. The vast majority of Venables' text deals with fly fishing for trout, but he left us another valuable hint about early salmon flies:

"I shall only add, that the Salmon flies must be made with wings standing one behind the other, whether two or four, he also delights in the most gaudy and orient colours you can choose; the wings I mean chiefly, if not altogether, with long wings and tails."

If we put our assembled knowledge together, we have a picture of a seventeenth century salmon fly: a dull body, made of bear's hair, perhaps wrapped in coloured silk, and hackled with cock, pheasant, partridge, or the gaudy feathers of macaw, flamingo or parakeet. The fly might have been left as a hackle, or it could have been dressed with one, two, or even three pairs of wings, taken from the teal, heron, mallard or falcon.

The size of the patterns would have ranged from large trout fly size upwards. Within this description there is scope for creating flies as dull as the old Tweed patterns, or as startling as anything Blacker or Kelson might have tied.

Absolutely nothing useful about salmon flies was to be written for another hundred years. Then two quite detailed patterns pop up from nowhere, in Charles Bowlker's edition of the Art of Angling, in 1774.

DRAGON FLY, LIBELLA, or LIBELLULA

"The wings are made of a reddish brown feather from the wing of a cock turkey, the body of auburn-coloured mohair warped with yellow sill, and a ginger cock's hackle wrapped under the wings, the hook No. 2 or 3. Or it may be varied thus; the wings of a rich brown feather from a heron's wing, the body drab, or olive-coloured mohair, a bittern's hackle under the wings, and a forked tail. This fly is about two inches in length."

> "This is also a salmon fly, and is seen at the same time as the Dragon Fly. The wings are made of a feather from the neck or tail of a peacock; the body of deep green mohair, warped with light green silk, and a jay's feather striped blue and white, wrapped under the wings; the hook No. 2 or 3. It may be thus varied; the wings of a dark shining green feather from a drake's wing, the body of green mohair warped with chocolate silk, and a bittern's hackle under the wings."

These are royal flies, for royal fish, and the dressings are complicated enough that it is hard to believe that they do not represent many decades of experiment; but we can only speculate as to their parentage. Certainly, they are very different to Barker's fly. Then in 1800, a man called Taylor gave us three detailed salmon fly patterns, the first good description of how to tie a salmon fly, and, incidentally, the first reference to the vice. In making use of a vice, Taylor set himself years ahead of his time; even the great George Kelson tied by hand.

Taylor's Salmon Flies

> 1. Hook No. 1; the feather for the wings, the darkish brown speckled part of a bittern's wing stripped off from the stem; the mixture for the body, the reddish brown part of hare's fur, and deep copper-coloured mohair; the tail forked, with two single strips of the same feather as the wings, a bittern's hackle over the body for legs; and the head the same colour as the body.
>
> 2. Let the hook be the same size as the former; the wings, the mottled feather of a peacock's wing, intermixed with that of any fine plain dusky red; the mixture for the body, the light brown hair or fur of a bear next to the skin, sable fur, and gold-coloured mohair, gold twist, a large black cock's hackle, and a red one a little larger; and for the head, a bit of deep red mohair.
>
> 3. For this fly also the hook must be No. 1; the wings, the feather of a hern, intermixed with the spotted reddish part of that of a mallard; for the body, lead-coloured mohair, small gold twist, a large white hackle dyed a deepish blue; a bit of the same feather as the wings for the tail, the head the same colour as the body; and your silk a lead colour."

After Taylor, the salmon fly never looked back, and every decade or so, new techniques would catapult its development forward. Sixteen years later, Bainbridge gave us another five salmon flies, including another gaudy fly. Bainbridge's book cast an interesting light on the philosophy behind contemporary salmon fly tying when he speculated on the reasons for the success of "gaudy" flies:

> "Those made in imitation of the Dragon Flies are the most to be depended upon, as these insects are constantly hovering over the water, consequently are more familiar to the view of the fish. They are however, so capricious, that they will not infrequently rise at an extremely gaudy fly, which bears no resemblance to nature, in preference even to a real wasp or Dragonfly..."

There is no doubt that early salmon fishermen tied flies which represented dragon flies, for the allusion comes up again and again. These flies were anything if dull, which leads us to another question: where does the "gaudy" salmon fly owe its origins? The conventional view is that the origin of the gaudy fly lies in Ireland, but there is little evidence for such a theory. The earliest authenticated Irish flies date to about 1797 and even then, these are trout flies. It has been conjectured that fly fishing was brought to Ireland by English officers manning the garrisons, but this is pure, if reasonable, speculation. It wasn't until the 1830's that any light was cast upon the nature of Irish salmon flies, when Belton wrote:

> "The Limerick flies are almost always very gaudy and have silk bodies; whereas those tied in Dublin are usually of mohair or fur, and much more sober in their colours, although infinitely more showy than Scotch salmon flies.
>
> "The fly I found the most successful here, as almost every where else that I have tried it, was one of O'Shaughnessy's, a deep orange, silk body, with broad gold tinsel, rich mixed wings, and macaw horns."

So, by the early nineteenth century, the Irish school was sufficiently well established that it had developed regional variations. It is possible that the influence of Irish patterns on their Scottish and English counterparts has been understated, but on the other hand, we know from Franck and Walton that gaudy patterns existed in England as far back as the seventeenth century. Neither Franck nor Taylor kept exotic feathers in their bags without a reason, so we can assume that the gaudy fly enjoyed an uninterrupted history in England between 1658 and 1800, although there is no written record of it during that period. Despite the dearth of salmon fly patterns of any description before 1800, a considerable proportion of early flies are extremely colourful. For example, in 1806, Mackintosh gives two flies; the Golden Fly and the Silver Fly, which are unquestionably gaudy. Even though Mackintosh plagiarised liberally from other sources, his two gaudy flies are unique and there is no evidence that they came from Ireland. Another author from the same period, Scotcher, wrote in 1810 that "...there are many gaudy flies made for them", which implies that he saw nothing new about gaudy salmon flies either.

After Bainbridge, salmon fishing became immensely popular, and the demand for different patterns of fly exploded, no doubt encouraged by local tackle shops who had a good deal to gain from the new breed of travelling salmon fisherman. This was the period when the idea of the gaudy fly really took hold of the popular imagination. Ireland was a hot bed of fly development at the time and fly fishermen brought back brilliant new patterns when they returned Ireland - with the result that gaudy flies became strongly associated with the Emerald Isle. My view is that the gaudy salmon flies were standard fare in England from at least the seventeenth century, gaining a powerful boost from an influx of new Irish patterns starting from 1815 onwards. The gaudy fly of the nineteenth century might have been popularised and developed by Blacker and the Limerick tiers, but its origins lie in Walton's day - perhaps even earlier.

If Bainbridge lit the fuse of interest in salmon fly tying, Blacker was the man who caused an explosion of development. Born in Newry, County Down, but established in London, Blacker's book was a tour-de-force, but his instructions are difficult to follow. Various explanations have been put forward to explain the problems that professional tiers experience when recreating the flies, including the awful possibility that Blacker intentionally made the instructions confusing. Recently, John Betts has advanced the sensible theory that part of the explanation may be that the book was "ghost-written", in part or in total. The best candidate for a ghostwriter would be Edward Fitzgibbon, who already done the same for at least one other author. If John is right, the tying instructions may well be confusing because of problems Fitzgibbon experienced describing the swift movements of Blacker's long-practised fingers. Whatever the explanation, the sheer variety of materials in some of Blacker's salmon flies presents a challenge even to the experienced fly-tier, and Blacker employed a range of materials that would have stopped Taylor in his tracks. Take Blacker's No. 2 salmon fly:

> "The wings are composed of golden pheasant tail feather , mixed with the following: strips of bustard, scarlet macaw, wood duck, mallard, yellow macaw body feather, silver pheasant, and a topping over all, extending a little longer than the other feathers; blue and yellow macaw feelers. The wing, as above, should be laid out on a piece of paper, ready to tie on after the body and legs are formed, the jay rolled over the head in this fly, and the head tied on last, of black ostrich. The tail is a topping, mixed with a strip of woodduck feather, tipped with silver twist, a tag of gold-colour floss, and black ostrich; the body puce floss to the centre, and the remainder orange pig hair or mohair, ribbed with broad silver tinsel, and a guinea-hen rump feather rolled over the orange beneath the jay hackle. The hook No. 6 or 9, Limerick."

The rest of Blacker's dressing is reasonably straightforward, but the very fact that he tied them "in the hand" meant that the patterns dated badly by some standards. Only four decades later, Kelson was to take the view that they were only historical curiosities. He was right, but what curiosities!

Many fishermen saw the gaudy fly as a worthless interloper, which displaced perfectly good local patterns. The view was particularly prevalent in Scotland, which, until the 1850's, had not experienced the flood of English anglers who established gaudy patterns by force of usage. During the middle years of the nineteenth century the link between patterns and their rivers of origin began to be lost, although were tiers still paying lip-service to the tradition many decades later. Before 1850, an angler like Scrope was content to fish with a mere handful of flies, all with strong local associations. After 1850, as salmon flies became more diverse, it was difficult to justify the link. The new flies had a truly international flavour. Here is Stoddart's No. 1 spring pattern for the Spey, a sombre thing:

White wing: pure white feather taken from swan or white turkey; six or seven slips are sufficient for each wing. Body: dark-blue or black pig's wool in the upper part, succeeded by claret-coloured ditto; hackle dark, edged with brown, in the upper part, crimson hackle further down, silver tinsel. Shoulders: light-blue hackle intermixed with mohair of the same colour. Tail-tufts: light yellow.

It was around this time that fishermen began to abandon flies tied to gut in favour of the loop. Loop attachment of flies reduced the difficulties fishermen faced at a stroke: it made the carrying of flies much easier, it eliminated the problem of flies cracking off their 'own' gut, and it made changing flies much easier. Naturally, it was seen as a great threat to world order and fishermen were to fight a rearguard action against such a perversion of nature's laws for another sixty years.

The two outstanding tiers of the middle years of the nineteenth century are Jones and Traherne. Jones was a tackle dealer with a business in the heart of London's most fashionable area He sold high quality rods and reels to the leisured classes, and chose Tolfrey, a young journalist to write a book which promoted Norway, Jones' customer's most favoured destination. While the book can be taken with a pinch of salt (as far as we know, neither Tolfrey nor Jones ever went to Norway,) Jones's patterns were outstandingly beautiful and took the salmon fly new standards of complexity. Just compare one of Taylor's salmon fly dressings with Jones' Assassin:

> "Hook - No. 7, 8, or 9.
> Tail - Golden Pheasant, Guinea-hen, and Blue Macaw.
> Tip - Gold twist, blue sill, scarlet silk, and Ostrich.
> Body - Lower half, dark blue, and upper half, claret Pig's wool.
> Ribbed - Gold tinsel.
> Legs - Dark claret hackle.
> Throat - Jay's Hackle. Wing - (Mixed) Mallard, Teal, Bustard, Black Cockatoo, Guinea-hen, golden Tippet, and golden Topping overall.
> Horns - Blue Macaw.
> Head - Black."

Traherne was perhaps the greatest fly tier of all time, and directly inspired George Kelson. From the "Emerald Gem," a riot of green and blue macaw, with a delicate filigree of golden pheasant topping as wing, to the "Chatterer" (a pattern which I have always regarded as the definitive gaudy fly, since it requires no less than 200 Blue Chatterer feathers to form its body,) his patterns were masterpieces. More than anything else, Traherne's flies are a celebration of materials and artistry, and it remains a technical challenge for an able fly dresser to be able to tie them well. A modest man, Traherne left it to his friend George Kelson to promote his patterns, and they survive largely through the latter's writings, chiefly in the magazine Land and Water.

By the 1890's, a truly vast selection of patterns was available, and the well-equipped salmon fisherman's fly-box was been a riot of colour. Kelson published nearly 300 patterns and Hale, 361. There was a fly for every conceivable circumstance, and several flies for circumstances that were not conceivable (for example, the Elsie, which Kelson justified as "a special pattern for fish lying behind upright rocks and large boulders.") Kelson was a perfectionist, and devoted more words to the subject of how to tie a tag on a fly than most early authors devoted to the entire pattern. A sea change had taken place: the flytier's vice was widely available, although Kelson didn't use it, and numerous specialised tools were in use. The range of materials employed at the turn of the century was truly incredible, and tying techniques were far more sophisticated than they had been even thirty years earlier. The new patterns took the technical challenge of fly tying onto a new plane, since the process of cramming so many materials into a limited space mercilessly exposed the slightest technical flaw.

In Kelson's day, the complexity of the salmon fly was at its zenith. Some idea of the hold that the gaudy fly had over salmon fishermen's minds can be had from a quote from George himself:

> "Is it not notorious that in several of our rivers the fish have been educated to persistently snub old patterns in favour of the new? And is it indeed not an achievement to present to the fish a fly that he then and there prefers to your rival's - to have yourself made the attraction so strong, as to establish, more or less permanently, a decided taste in the fish, so that he refuses other flies, to wait for yours!"

If the 1890s marked the zenith of the gaudy salmon fly's evolution, the first serious sign of dissent also marked them. Sir Herbert Maxwell came to the unromantic conclusion that the colour and materials of a

fly mattered very little to the fish, while the size and movement were all important. He had chipped at the foundations of the gaudy fly, but we have to wait another thirty years before its empire finally fell. The death knell for the gaudy salmon fly was sounded, with particular finality, by A.H.E. Wood. In the process of his development of greased line fishing, Wood realised that the old, heavy patterns of fly, so suitable when fished deep, were hindering his technique. Wood's summer patterns were sparse to the point where it was hardly possible to reduce them any more. The 'Blueshanks' and the Redshanks' took the ultimate step; they were bare hooks, with the shank painted the appropriate colour. They were a far cry from anything Blacker would have recognised, but Wood caught fish with them; lots of fish.

The discovery of greased-line fishing for salmon encouraged a great deal of experiment, but most fishermen stayed loyal to traditional patterns of fly, dressing them more lightly as the floating line demanded. With Europe stuck in its ways, a new and radical approach to salmon flies was needed, and it emerged in the United States. Having taken to fly fishing salmon relatively late, American fishermen used derivations of British patterns until the turn of the nineteenth century. Fifty years of experimentation was long enough to reveal that something different was needed. Shortly before 1903, Theodore Gordon tied the first dry flies for salmon; a friend used them on the Restigouche, and caught fish. After this early experiment, it was left to Colonel Ambrose Monell, Edward Hewitt and George LaBranche to drive the development of the dry fly. The patterns that emerged were tied with palmered bodies, but it didn't take long before it was discovered that salmon would take almost any fly fished dry, when the fish were in the mood. Dry fly fishing for salmon, so effective in America and Canada, has never been popular in Europe, but it is interesting to note that the technique works very well in Russia.

The exact origins of the hair-wing salmon fly are obscure, but it seems to have originated in the late nineteenth century in North America. Bucktail flies were first used for bass fishing as early as the 1890s. As far as is known, the originator of hairwing flies was an Idaho rancher called A.S. Trude, who first fished his patterns some time between 1886 and 1890. Colonel Lewis S. Thompson saw the flies and had them adapted for trout fishing, trying them much later for salmon on the Restigouche (in 1928, or even a few years earlier.) The motive behind this radical departure from tradition is not recorded, but it isn't hard to guess. Many of the materials used for tying "standard" fly patterns were becoming hard to find in Europe, never mind America, and the temptation to experiment with local materials that were abundant and cheap must have been hard to resist. Trude was in an ideal position to take the plunge, because bass flies lacked the long and intimidating history that had so fossilised salmon flies. Trude was not alone. Theodore Gordon also experimented with a hairwing pattern in the late nineteenth century. His intention was to tie a better pike fly, but he found, incidentally, that the pattern would catch other game fish, including sahnon. The major development of the hairwing was undertaken in the 1920s and 1930s on the East coast of North America. The fully dressed wet fly was in widespread use in America at the time, and a group of fly tiers began experimenting with simpler conventional patterns. They worked so well that it wasn't long before they abandoned the use of feathers in the wing and started to tie with local materials such as bear, squirrel, woodchuck and deer. The success of these patterns elbowed out the traditional British salmon flies, and led to a new and innovative school of North American fly tiers.

In a sign of growing American dominance in the field, hair-wing patterns didn't take long to make the transfer across the Atlantic. The hair-wing had become a significant influence on British patterns by the 1960s, with many traditional patterns being adapted to allow hair-wing ties. It seemed a small concession at the time, but with the acceptance of the new materials came a new mood in European fly-tying. As a result, when the consensus on the traditional wet fly broke down, it broke down very quickly. In the 1950's Richard Waddington invented his eponymous hook, which mounted a serious challenge to the heavy single irons that had been used until then. It is said that the tube fly was originated in around 1945 by a fly dresser called Winnie Morawski, who worked for the tackle firm of Charles Playfair and Co. at Aberdeen. To begin with, Winnie used hollowed out sections of turkey quills, with the treble strung inside the quill. To begin with, she used this unusual base to dress traditional patterns. Then a doctor called William Michie called at the shop, and suggested that she used sections of surgical tubing as a substitute for the quill. Later development resulted in the wing being dressed in a collar right around the tube, perhaps inspired by the Waddington, and the treble was left entirely outside the tube, so that the fly could "escape" up the line when a fish took. Suddenly, every aspect of salmon fly design was up for grabs, and a new era of invention was to follow.

Readers of the "Flyer" will be well aware of the new lease of life the fully dressed salmon fly has taken in the collectors market, but it is not to say that the traditional salmon fly is becoming fossilised. Steve Fernandez has taken the 'salmon fly as art' one stage fiuther and many of his flies not only have

extreme shapes, but they are no longer tied on hooks. Whether they "count" as salmon flies any more is a matter of debate - but then there were those who said the same of young Mr. Blacker's creations. The future lies in your hands.

QUESTIONS ANYONE?

Charles Vestal

Question: I recently purchased a bulk pack of wood duck feathers. Could you tell me the best way to prepare these for use? -Anonymous

Answer: To answer this question, I took a bag of assorted wood duck feathers that had been given to me and recorded the steps that I followed. Here then is one way of preparing these feathers for use.

1) Wash all of the feathers in a warm wash bath using a small amount of Ivory Liquid soap. Rinse well.

2) Wash a second time in a warm wash bath using a small amount of Woolite. Rinse well.

3) Dry the feathers. This can be done in several ways. One way is to lay the feathers out individually on paper towel and let them air dry. If you do this, it is necessary to stroke the feathers so that the barbs are not crossed. Another way is to put all of the feathers in an old pillowcase, tie the pillowcase opening around the outlet of a hair dryer, and then air tumble and dry. Don't use a high heat setting on the hair dryer.

4) Take each individual dried feather, inspect the feathers and keep the best specimens. I discarded all feathers with damage such as broken barbs and kept those without the white and black tip for tying trout flies.

5) Steam each individual feather by holding it in the outlet steam vent of a tea kettle. Be careful to avoid overheating the feather and getting it wet again. The object here is to "fluff' out the feather.

6) Start the process to pair up the feathers by selecting all the lefts. As you steam a left feather, broadly categorize it as you lay it out according to a size and/or shape characteristic. I put the lefts with broad white stripes in one row, medium white stripes in another and the narrow white stripes in a third row. Within each row, I placed the largest overall feathers toward the left side.

7) Now pick out a right feather and match it against the lefts. This process is made much easier by the pre-sorting done in Step 6.

8) For a final match, hold the two feathers up against a light source with the good sides together. The two feathers should have the same width black and white stripe, overall color and shape.

9) When you've matched the feathers, store them flat. I like to use a 3" X 5" card for each pair and staple them to the card at the quill.

At this time I contacted Marvin Nolte for further information on selecting wood duck feathers.

Marvin likes to categorize his wood duck feathers into four (4) categories according to the white bar width:

1) Wide - used for whole feather wings and antique bass flies (a measurement taken on a "Matador" dressed by Marvin shows a white bar width of 4 mm),

2) Medium - used for a bolder look in a cheek,

3) Narrow - used for cheeks, and,

4) Double white bar.

Marvin prefers a narrow or double white bar for his patterns because he feels that they present a more subtle appearance on the finished fly. Marvin also states that pairs with both narrow white and narrow black bars make the prettiest cheeks if you use the whole feather rather than a strip.

Marvin further divides these four groups by size as:

1) Large - indicated by being more or less flat across the tip of the feather,

2) Medium - indicated by rounded tips, and

3) Small - usually these have a very fine uppermost black bar.

Segregating by size prevents using an exceptional pair for sides on smaller flies. The small pairs are used by Marvin for tail veilings.

Marvin also passed on the following. "There is one more categorization I perform but consider optional. For use by only truly compulsive high graders. Some of the pairs will have equal bars. That is, the white bar and the black bar above and below it will be of equal width. I reserve these 'equal bars' pairs for salmon flies. The remaining, perfectly decent, pairs are used on other types of flies."

HYBRIDS

Michel Fontan

There comes a time when your creativity takes you beyond the rules and the urge of tying brings you to a nervous breakdown. It is not as if there is not enough patterns already existing to challenge your skills, and God knows there is a number of patterns that meet the challenge criteria. Also, It is not as if you wanted to do "The" Green Highlander. No, this is not your quest, as I presume that such a fly is not yet tied and probably won't be. Of course you can say that you have seen the most beautiful fly, and I will believe you, having myself seen the most beautiful fly. Beauty lives in the eyes of the beholder...

What I am alluding to here is the special urge that takes you to "innovate", or to attempt a new approach in the world of Salmon Fly tying. I am not talking about inventing, since this has been done way before us the very first time somebody, somewhere tied a feather on a hook!

So you are standing in front of your vise and feel a bit funny. No, you are not going to tie your 9th Jock Scott or your 3rd Popham, and no, you are not inclined to do another Kelson, Hale, or whoever's pattern. This is a very natural feeling that anybody involved in Salmon Fly tying gets at least once in his or her life.

This feeling came to me long ago and I never have been able to satisfy it. That is, until I discovered Hybrids. I am very keen on fully dressed flies, and I became very partial to Spey flies, especially the ones tied by Bob Veverka. The look of his flies reminds me of what, in the kitchen of the "gourmet restaurant", we call: organized mess. You know, those dishes that look almost too good to be eaten, a profusion of colors and textures that looks like they were just tossed around ... In fact everything is thought out and each component of the dish is intended to be exactly what it looks like, the whole thing is the result of precise work (that explain the $$$ bill at the end of your meal!). So, also, are Bob Veverka's flies. Look at his Speys, they are alive, breathing and flowing all over the inside of Judith Dunham's book!

So, I decided to combine the characteristics of both flies. I tried to elaborate a body that will mix fine floss work, fancy ribbing and bushy, mixed colors and seal dubbing. I also like to use toppings or Coq de Leon feathers as hackle, this gives special light in the dubbing, then I use Colored spey hackle. The wing construction is similar to a fully dressed fly, with small amounts of married strips of the classic materials; but the wings are set as flat as possible as in the Dee style. What inspired me was John Van D e r h o o f ' s "Moonlight". I haven't yet tried to add shoulders or roofs to it but the idea is definitely tempting me. However I do add cheeks to the Jungle Cock, set low as the tradition wants it! I finish the fly with a collar style hackle. The general idea of the hybrid is to give a "three dimensional effect" to a fully dressed fly and to obtain a more "fancy" spey. It also gives a lot of freedom to one's own creativity and breaks the rules that can smother you from time to time.

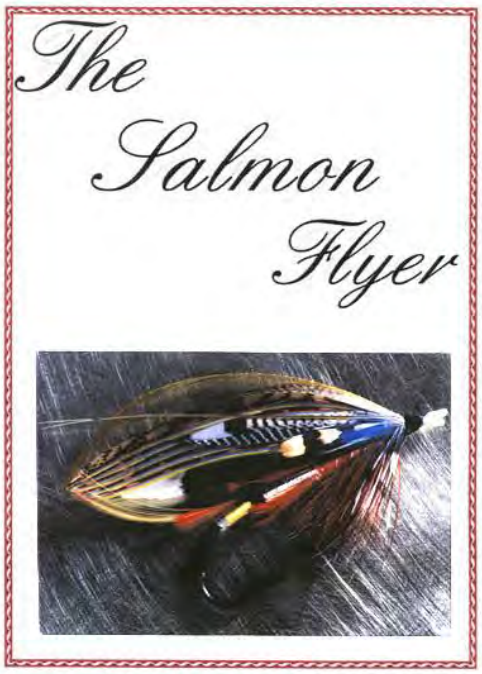
Here is the dressing for one of my hybrids: "The Bopp-Hale", named for that beautiful comet (Hale-Bopp - ed.) that recently lit up the night skies of this past spring (see cover photo).

Tag: silver tinsel, white floss, a few strands of pink and light blue floss into it.
Tail: topping and purple cotinga (throat feather of chatterer)

Butt: gray ostrich herl
Body: first half of pale blue silk, gold and silver tinsel on each side. Second half of cream, light blue and light pink angora goat, well mixed and picked out, ribbed with silver lace.
Hackle: a topping over the seal
Throat: gray heron
Wings: argus pheasant, white and light green turkey, scarlet macaw, peacock and Amherst pheasant.
Cheeks: Indian crow
Collar hackle: Malay peacock pheasant body feather, 2 or 3 turns depending on the feather.
Head: ostrich

Next time you get this funny feeling in front of your vise, try the hybrid's recipe. Let your imagination do the job and enjoy.

The Salmon Flyer
Vol. 10 - No. 1, Winter, 1998



RED DRUMMOND
Dressed by Gary Grant

THE CONTEMPLATIVE FLY TIER

Robert C. Arnold

I think it is important to recognize good work, exceptional work, and to sing its praises-to acknowledge it critically and to suspend all literary and aesthetic judgments briefly, and to simply rejoice in its accomplishment. Therefore, I want to commend to you Mike Radencich, our former editor's, new book, Tying The Classic Salmon Fly: A Modem Approach to Traditional Techniques (Stackpole, 1997), $50, and urge you to buy it. It is a bargain. It might easily cost half again as much and still be a good buy.

The word "advanced" should be somewhere in the title, I think, for this is not a book for beginners, not unless they are more scrupulous and talented than most. In recent years we have seen a number of new books on basic flytying, including some on the salmon fly. All are useful to a varying degree. Many of us started out on Eric Taverner's Salmon Fishing, Volume X of the Lounsdale Library, and we were both encouraged and a bit baffled by it and its shorthand descriptions of the steps in tying. Then came Poul Jorgenson's most helpful book, Salmon Flies (1978). Some of us cut our eyeteeth on it. It was well organized, detailed, and the photographs were of great help in proceeding step-by-step in our work. When we needed still more assistance, we went to the out-of-print, hard to find copies of Hale, Pryce-

Tennatt, and eventually bravely tackled that master of fly fishing, salmon-fly tying, and general obfuscation, Mr. George Kelson. The salmon fly was easy, he told us. Perhaps for him it was.

Recently there have been Joe Bates's three excellent books, the posthumous one enhanced by the fine photography ofguess who again-Mike Radencich. With pictures that sharp and pleasing (not to mention large and detailed) there remains no excuse for us being satisfied with flies, including our own, that are anything short of excellent. Not unless we merely want flies to fish with, in which case the patterns can be reduced in some elements and tied fairly slovenly. The fish don't care; only some of us.

In 1995 the stock of basic salmon fly tying books was added to nicely by Ron Alcott, who is so good at taking beginners and instructing them how to vely: tie proficiently, passing is Salmon Fly along many important tricks of the trade. But for the more demanding and already skilled tyer there has been a singular absence of valuable help and critical advice. Our publication, The Salmon Flyer, has helped to fill that void, though it is badly limited in what it can do. It has done a decent job, though limited by severe financial constraints and the inability to pay its writers. Again it is Mike Radencich we are grateful to. A lot of good, state-of-theart information has been collected and disseminated in our newsletter. Now Mike has come along with a book for those of us who care excessively about the salmon fly and the intricacies of its construction. (Lately the word "Atlantic" tends to be dropped from the fly's title, as the fly's popularity has moved steadily toward the Pacific.).

To produce such a book, Mike spent six years tying flies and traveling around the country photographing the best tyers and recording their methods. In the past such secrets have been jealously hoarded, much as one keeps to oneself his best fishing spots. Now the best tyers have come forward and spoken out. They have consented having Mike photograph them at the work they do best.

The book is divided into detailed chapters on the most important elements in fly making and design. Here are Wayne Luallen on tying the married-wing fly, The Baron, which incidentally and perhaps ironically is the same pattern Eric Taverner used in his seminal book, Salmon Fishing, but is more detailed and useful in showing us, step-by-step, how to achieve the desired results; Mark Waslick on tying the fullfeathered winged fly, the Regalia; Bob Veverka on the strip-wing or Dee fly, using as example a no-name fly perhaps of his own design which incorporates all of its basic elements. Additionally there are detailed chapters on the married-winged fly (Marvin Nolte), mounting salmon-fly wings (G. Stackhouse Scotville, Jr.), processing and selecting golden pheasant crest, making tiny heads, and winding finely tapered underbodies (Mike Radencich), dyeing materials and an appendix B which tells you brand names of dyes and where to obtain them (William T. Roubal), making exhibition-quality hooks (Master Hook Maker, Eugene Sunday), of whom Editor Mike says "anybody with a few hand tools and a little patience can master. (Yes, easy for Leonardo, perhaps.) But then Mike adds that it may be really easy because the method consists of rebending existing hooks and eliminates the need to find wire of just the right gauge size, forming barbs, etc., involved in true hook making.

There is a long chapter illustrated by Mike's fine photos on how to mat and frame your flies. The techniques belong to Darwin Atkin. At the back of the book is a gallery of salmon fly-tying art and short biographies of the skilled tyers, each one represented by two or three flies. These include Charles Chute, Dorothy Douglas, the late Syd Glasso, Greg Hunt, Tom Juracek, Mark Kirschner, Mike McCoy, Jophn Olschewsky, Eugene Sunday, John Walker, Bob Warren, and John Wildermuth. Mike lists them alphabetically (and so do I) in order to give no illusion of ranking them. All are first-rate in a field whose numbers are growing daily. They are ordinary, eating, breathing human beings, and I am proud to say that some are friends of mine. I believe that their names and examples of their work cannot appear in print too often.

As a bonus, the book includes many pages of photos of original, exhibition flies, many of them tied by Mike. There are also plates he tied of the Blacker and the Trahern flies. They are unsurpassed in quality and will serve as a guide for anybody who wants to attempt them to check his own work against. Additionally, the patterns are given in the book; this is valuable, for they have been difficult to find in the past. The book is not, I repeat, for the beginner, not unless he is a super-fast learner and capable of moving on to advanced work quickly. Friends assure me that there are many young tyers today who are fast learners. I envy them their dedication and skill. The book is largely for the intermediate and advanced tyer, however. It will help him move on to the next level of competence. Important tyers have generously come forward and allowed Mike to photograph them at their work, revealing many of their secrets and tying tricks. They are invaluable in hurrying along the long learning process. There has never been a book like it in the past and it is unlikely there will be one in the future. To put it another way, all other books on tying the salmon fly seem in comparison to be noble failures, for they come up

shy of offering the fine details of what the tyer really needs to know, and often this is the minutiae. Congratulations, Mike. A fine job, handsomely done.

Three books have come my way lately, and while they do not relate to the salmon fly directly, I've found them enjoyable, and you may, too. One is Jack Sampson's fine biography of Lee Wulff. Lee knew many fly fishers in his long life and was noted not only for his ability to catch a lot of fish in difficult and innovative ways but for his friendliness and dedication to the cause of flyfishing. If you look back, so many things we enjoy came about as a direct result of Lee's curiosity and thoughtfulness. It is gratifying then to read in detail about that life.

There is literary biography and then there is literary autobiography. Most fishing books are autobiographical to a distressing degree, their authors permitting themselves long digressions having to do with catching a lot of big fish in remote locations. Charlie Kroll's book, nicely titled Pools of Memory, does this, too, but redeems itself with the author's sustained interest in where his quest takes him and comprises a kind of flyfishing history than spans the midTwentieth Century around the world. From the standpoint of Atlantic salmon, Charlie goes to the Big Laxa and catches some nice fish; there is a picture of him reclining in a bleak landscape, his requisite cane (for he badly injured himself in a car accident and never recovered to the point of being able to fish and wade without it) alongside, dressed in full ancestral Scottish gear, with a pair of twenty-pound salmon also reclining on the treeless tundra. It is not clear from the text whether Charlie caught both of them or only one, but the picture is unforgettable. So is much else in the book, including his fishing the Killey Water in Scotland and catching sea trout and a ten-pound salmon. He boldly poached the River Dee, as he was sure his ancestors did, around a bend, out of sight, but the fish he touched jumped free. I envy him this and the many other places he was determined to fish and did.

A third book that recalls a life as a flyfisher is Van Egan's Streamside Reflections. He was a friend of Roderick Haig-Brown, who was his role model, and Valerie edited the book for him. It traces his life and his fishing from upstate Wisconsin to Vancouver, Island, British Columbia, and like Kroll's book sadly reports a progressive decline in the health of so many fish stocks, over the years. Kroll does this by attaching an update addendum to his many short chapters; Egan weaves it through out his pleasant and very readable book, in particular tracing the demise of the famed Campbell river salmon and summer steelhead, and in the instance of the latter its partial recovery, but only through a broodstock-recovery hatchery program. Perhaps it is because I am growing older, too, that I enjoy this type of book and the kind of life it illustrates. Frank Amato published all three and deserves special thanks for bringing the last two to light. If potentially large sales were the only consideration, they wouldn't have been printed. But the books have redeeming literary value and we all would be poorer without them, for books like these enrich our lives, when the popular how-to-do it books usually do not.

SPECKLED BUSTARD

There are a number of classic patterns that call for bustard in the wing. In T.E. Pryce-Tannatt's book, How to Dress Salmon Flies, there are a copious number of patterns that call for florican and bustard in the wing. In salmon fly patterns, whenever bustard is called for in the wing the author is most likely referring to "Speckled" bustard, of which most often Kori bustard is used.

Suitable substitutes for speckled bustard include; light mottled turkey tail, ocellated turkey tail, and the "wrong" side of a peacock wing secondary.

LOW WATER SERIES

John Alevras

Each fall, following my annual pilgrimage to the Skeena system for steelhead, I return home and develop a series of winter projects for this vice. The thrill of a big buck boiling at a hitched Silver Hilton maybe gone for months, but a relaxed, creative time lies ahead. A time that brings with it a renewed anticipation of what the new creations will catch in the coming seasons.

These projects are balance of steelhead flies tied for the stream and salmon flies that will find their way into shadow boxes, domes and contributions to friends and conversation.

The salmon fly projects evolve from reading and reviewing the classics as presented in Bates, Kelson, Sawada, Jorgenson, Schmookler and others. These projects always precede the steelhead plans

because the tying of Doctors, Rangers and Parsons instill a discipline and elegant standard that I am convinced improves the quality of the steelhead patterns.

This year it was Bates' new book, Fishing Atlantic Salmon: The flies and the Pattems, and its many beautiful photographs (thank you, Mike Radencich) that triggered project number one, a series of low water flies. In particular, it was Mark Waslick's Black Doctor (page 208) that got my attention and most influenced my desire to tie low water flies.

My first step was to select the patterns that I would include in the set. This was a fun process because it involved hours of thumbing through my books looking for the right patterns. In the end I decided on a blend between a selection of traditional low water patterns-Silver Blue, Blue Charm, Jennie,. March Brown, Logie and Coachman, and some married wing classics, Green Highlander, Silver doctor, NightHawk and Dusty Miller.

In converting the full-dressed patterns to a low water style, I decided to simplify the recipes and eliminate any tail veilings, horns, shoulders, roofs, cheeks and toppings (the latter two being decisions I wish I had not made). The use of Jungle Cock for sides provided a nice opportunity to utilize the mini-nails at the base of the neck. Bodies were not modified.

I tied the bodies slightly longer than midpoint of the shank, but with the head distinctly back from the eye. The wings extended to the point of the hook. This structure seemed appropriate for the partridge N hook (2/0) that I used, but in fact it was another misstep. My intention was to use Bob Veverka's new hook (Daiichi 2131) that has a relatively flat eye and straight shank, two desirable qualities for low water patterns. I ordered the hooks from Bob, who appropriately described the N as a "glunky" hook, but I let my impatience get in the way and tied five of the patterns before Bob's lovely hooks arrived. I decided to complete the set on the N's.

I used Griffith's 14/0 thread and was very satisfied with its strength and ability to flatten. I was also pleased to find it did not cut into the wing fibers as I suspected it might for such a thin thread. Without question, it contributed to making and shaping the small heads I prefer. The thread also contributed to the thin bodies I was trying to achieve because it helped counteract the big iron in the N.

In tying and critiquing the flies, some new lessons were learned and the importance of several other techniques confirmed. In tying the small mallard and teal wings, I found an underwing of turkey helped greatly in stabilizing the softer, more fragile waterfowl feathers. I initially made the mistake of selecting and using the longer mallard fibers near the base of the stem, instead of fibers closer to the tips. The longer fibers were too soft near their tips where they had to be secured and thus much tougher to keep married and shaped than the fibers nearer the tip of the stem.

For the married wings I used 13 fibers and again found it desirable to utilize fibers nearer the tip of the stem. With such a short wing there was little opportunity to achieve the shoulder I normally like.

I found it difficult to shape the golden pheasant crest tails with the tiny feathers selected from the head. I struggled to achieve the vertical flair of the crest that adds so much to the larger patterns. Ultimately, I chose to only apply a topping to the Coachman.

I was disappointed in the tags that included floss. They were so short they did not add to the fly as they normally do when tied from barb to point. A straight tinsel tag would probably have been superior. If I had used two or three turns of the extra-fine oval tinsel, rather than five turns, there likely would have been a better balance.

I prefer thin, sparse, translucent bodies for both display flies, and especially for the flies I fish. Because the N's have such a thick shank I decided the tinsel-bodied flies should be secured at the rear, resulting in a single forward wrap. On the patterns requiring a yarn butt, such as the Silver Doctor, I secured the flat tinsel under the butt, but on the flies calling for a herl butt, I secured the tinsel immediately in front of the butt to ensure a smooth foundation for the herl. Normally I do not like to secure flat tinsel in front of the butt because it is so difficult to achieve a perfectly smooth body without a little ridge or gap. With the oval tinsels used for ribbing I did not remove the tinsel where it was secured, even though this could have further helped to reduce the thickness of the body and ensure a smooth foundation for the flat tinsel. Where the recipe called for floss, I attached it in front and wrapped back and then forward because it is so easy to flatten and control the thickness.

Finding hackle small and webby enough (a hook gap or less) for the bodies and throats required a great deal of careful selection. Ninety percent of the schlappen and saddle that is generally appropriate was simply too long. I most cases webby hackle near the tip was the best choice. I did not choose to utilize a false hackle approach for the throats that might have been a better idea, given the difficulty I had in finding suitable hackle.

The longest and most difficult part of the project, the framing of the flies for a Trout Unlimited auction is yet to be completed. For me this will take lots of planning and preparation because my intention is to display them in a shadow box with the name of each pattern written in calligraphy under each fly. An unsatisfactory recent effort to display a series of Knox's Spey patterns with a print of the River Spey taught me much more planning is required.

I would greatly appreciate any input from the membership on how they would have approached the project whether it be the choice of hook, how the patterns were modified, or how the quality could have been improved.

FLORICAN BUSTARD

Florican bustard (Otis tarda), or the Great Bustard is commonly simply referred to as Florican in many classic patterns. A suitable substitute is Lady Amherst pheasant side tails dyed tan.

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

James Shearer

Thanks to Michel Fontan for the great -article on "Are Those Feathers Legal". After reading this article, I have several more questions.

What if you have a friend who has become too old to tie flies and wants to give or sell you his feathers, including some of the now protected species? For example, you have a friend who purchased these rare feathers in the 40's, 50's and 60's and has a signed receipt for the feathers stating when and where they were purchased.

What if you have another friend or person who raises rare birds and wants to sell or give you feathers? An example here would be a pet store or hobbyist who has the birds.

Michel Fontan answers:

It is my understanding that the CITES applies mainly to commercial trade of protected species. In the case of a friend who did purchase the material before the 1973 date of creation of the Convention, you would not need any kind of papers other than the receipts stating the date and place of the purchase. If you intend to move these feathers across any country border, you would need to obtain a CITES permit. These permits can be obtained by applying to the appropriate federal agency with the sales receipt documentation.

In the case of a domestic bird raised in the US, the CITES does not apply as long as the use of the material is intended for a hobby use such as fly tying and not for a commercial purpose.

The CITES is really intended as protection from illegal international trading and will have very little to do with the average fly tyer unless he does sell the material in a commercial business. It is legal to buy the material, it is the responsibility of the dealer or sales person to justify the legal aspects of the material.

More information can be found in the actual legal text of the CITES by surfing the web at: http://www.indirect.com/www/bazza/ cites/conv. Html

TIPS ON TAGS

Here is one technique you may want to consider when tying an oval tinsel tip for a tinsel and floss tag. This technique leaves a very smooth surface for the floss tag because no tinsel is brought forward of the tip.

Start by close wrapping the thread back to just short of the point of the barb of the hook. Next strip off about 1/4 inch of the oval tinsel to expose the silk core. Now using a soft-loop tie in the tinsel on top of

the hook shank. Next pull back slightly on the tinsel to expose about 1/16 inch of silk beyond the tie down point. Then with flattened thread, firmly bind down the tinsel with two thread wraps edge-to-edge. With open wraps, wind the thread forward to get it out of the way. Close wrap the tinsel, 5 turns, with the first turn on the bare hook. Unwind the thread and secure the tinsel with two wraps of thread on the bottom of the hook. Next, using tweezers, strip the tinsel to expose the core. Carefully remove the thread wraps while holding the tinsel in place, and bind down the silk with one wrap of flattened thread. Trim the excess tinsel, and wind the thread to the floss tie in point.

TOUCAN, UNDERWINGS AND THE JOCK SCOTT

When dressing the body veiling of the classic Jock Scott that calls for toucan, you may want to consider as a substitute for toucan; dyed ring neck pheasant "ring" or hen neck feathers; broad, flat Golden pheasant crest (found where crest abuts tippets); dyed Cul de Canard; various small birds and parrots that have yellow orange feathers.

When using the golden pheasant crest feathers try using two veilings on top and two on the bottom, not bothering to stack them precisely. That creates a " busier" took, more like toucan.

If the white-tipped turkey underwing rides up between the married wings such that it is barely visible here is possible solution that might help. Try humping the wing more before tying it in, then hump it again after it is tied in.

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Vol. 10 - No. 2, Spring, 1998

THE LION AND DEWDROP
Dressed by Tom Juracek

A NEW LOOK AT OLD FLIES

Jon Harrang

The idea that the best salmon fly dressers the world has ever known are alive and working today has been promoted to the point that few people even question whether or not it is actually true. The purpose of this article is not to take away from what today's many talented tiers are doing but to perhaps offer another point of view on the antique flies that were tied and fished long ago.

Consider the following:

Due to the many technological advances which have occurred during the past sixty or seventy years, we have a much easier time of fly dressing than did our forefathers. Now we have access to flytying threads that are very fine and extremely strong, whereas the threads available a hundred years ago of comparable strength were considerably thicker. Nevertheless, by studying antique flies it is amazing how many of these old patterns have nicely shaped heads that are proportional with the rest of the fly. When examining these ancient flies we must also account for the heavy gut which was used and remember that it was tied in so that it extended almost all the way back to the butt in order to have the strength required to land a 20- or 30-pound salmon. This obviously contributes significantly to the larger heads and bulkier bodies of antique flies. Today's salmon flies sporting tiny heads and a centimeter of ultra-thin gut tied in at the front might look pretty, but if they were ever actually fished they wouldn't hold a feisty bluegill, let alone be able to withstand the savage strike of a full-size steelhead or salmon.

Another advantage we take for granted is the rotary flytying vice. Off times when we study antique salmon flies it is easy to forget that many were dressed without a vise. Interestingly, although the vise was first mentioned in 1800 in Samuel Taylor's Angling in All Branches, Blacker (1855), Kelson (1895), and Pryce-Tannat (1914) all offer instructions for dressing flies totally by hand. Hale's How to Dress Salmon Flies(1892) as well as Francis Francis'(1867) regard the use of a vise as advantageous, but indicate that it is by no means a necessary piece of equipment. Francis goes on to state : "Professional tiers seldom, if ever use a vice. Their fingers answer for all purposes, and they get on so much more rapidly than the amateur, and obtain so much more precision, by carrying out only one process at a time when tying flies in bulk or large numbers."

It is interesting to note that while Captain Hale preferred using a vise, Kelson claimed to do better work by hand. On page 262 of the Nov. 29, 1884 Fishing Gazette Kelson writes " The vice question, I am told has been ventilated in the Gazette. I did not see the controversy; at any rate (speaking of myself again, which I always seem to be doing), I cannot work precisely with a vice, and so never use mine, even for the smallest trout flies. Of course professionals do, because they can progress more rapidly; but whether in such diminutive flies their work is up to our standard is entirely another question. That it is very serviceable to dressers who work elaborate bodies of salmon flies from the head end of the hook there can be no two opinions." It should be noted that in The Art of The Atlantic Salmon Fly, Joe Bates describes a vise given to him from the Three Salmons Hotel at Usk, in Wales, which was reportedly used by Kelson to dress many flies, most notably his Usk Grub. We will never know if Kelson intentionally misled his readers on this subject in order to appear a more skilled flydresser, or if over time the stories surrounding that old vise grew a little more impressive with every retelling. As we all know, this is a common occurrence amongst fishermen.

And now a question for the reader: have you ever tried to dress a salmon fly using only your hands? Obviously, it can be done, but it is not easy to do high-quality work. The most fitting analogy I have heard likens it to dentistry without anesthesia. If unfamiliar with this method of fly dressing, even relatively simple patterns can raise one's blood pressure to new and dangerous heights. Attempting to create a good looking, fully hand-tied Jock Scott would probably devastate your ego to the point that you would at best throw a screaming tantrum and at worst have family and friends hiding all sharp objects from you and trying to find some way to get your flytying room equipped with rubber walls!

In addition to the many high-quality fly tying vises we have available to us, we should not forget the bobbin. I am unsure when the bobbin's use in fly tying became commonplace, but all my research thus far indicates it is a fairly recent development. Eric Tavemer's Fly Tying for Salmon published in 1942 shows a length of tying thread wound on a hook with a pair of hackle pliers attached instead of a bobbin. All the old books instruct the reader to work with a length of thread held in the hand. As a youngster, I taught myself to tie flies using this method. What a joyful discovery the bobbin was for me! What a difference a bobbin makes in terms of added thread control and tying speed!

Even something as basic as proper lighting is a tremendous advantage. Keep in mind that it wasn't so long ago that there was no such thing as a light bulb (hard to believe, isn't it?), and people were either limited to tying during the daytime or else had to make due with candles. Additionally, the high-quality magnification tools available now allow us to inspect the finest details of our work at every step along the way. Many of us would be hating life without these modern conveniences.

In the heyday of the classic salmon fly a century ago, fishing for Atlantic Salmon in the British Isles was not generally a pastime for the average person. Although there were some public waters, much of the

better fishing was to be found on expensive private beats. Originally, gillies tied many flies for their well-to-do clients, and a wide range of patterns could also be ordered through large companies such as Farlow's, Hardy's, etc. The people working for these firms tied classic flies day-in and day-out, it was how they put food on the table. They were paid according the number of flies they tied, and so-it stands to reason that over time they became adept at reaching that balance between quality and speed that all professional tiers must achieve. Although there are a handful of folks around the world dressing salmon flies full-time today, for the great majority of us it is an activity we squeeze in when we can. Isn't it reasonable to suppose that a person dressing flies, all day every day, would over time develop a far more intimate knowledge of materials and how to apply them to a hook than someone for whom flytying is merely a hobby?

In many cases the few antique flies that have survived the ravages of time are "working" flies that were meant to be fished. Show flies were also dressed on occasion, but unlike today this was the exception rather than the rule. Now our whole approach is different; if we spend multiple hours on a full-dress pattern, who cares? As long as the finished fly looks good we're satisfied. As hobbyists, we can be as finicky with our material selection and as meticulous with our flydressing as we desire. It is unfair and meaningless for us to compare our presentation-quality, time-is-not-a-factor flies with the fishing flies of yesteryear. We all put considerably more effort into flies we know will be framed and hung on the wall than those we plan on sacrificing to the river gods on our next fishing trip. While today's flies are in general much "cleaner-looking" than most antique flies, chances are that 100 years from now they won't look nearly so nice. We should not let the current God-is-in-thedetails mentality lead us to believe that we are any more skilled at flydressing than the tiers working a century ago. Perhaps some antique exhibition-quality salmon flies still exist. If anyone reading this knows of any, please send a note to the Salmon Flyer. It would be great to get some photos of them and have reprints available for purchase by the readership.

So ask yourself, if you were stripped of your vise, your bobbin and your specialty fly tying light and handed a candle, a blind-eye hook and a length of thread, would you be willing to go up against one of the old masters in a flydressing competition? I didn't think so.

HORN DROOP & COUNTERWOUND THREAD

Marvin Nolte

Anyone can glue a salmon fly together. Ordinarily I agree with folks opposed to using glue to compensate for lack of technique. There are exceptions.

Have you noticed that in framed salmon flies older than, say five years, the Macaw horns are no longer erect? I have seen such flies with horns nearly parallel to the body. Those flies are suffering from insidious horn droop. The symptoms of this affliction do not seem to affect other feathers.

The problem is easily prevented. When the fly is finished, perform whatever contortions are required to cross the horns a short distance from their tips. Place a "mircodot" of very thin Flexament (or thinned GOOP) at the intersection. After this treatment, the horns will nevertheless droop over time. But, the sag will stop when the cemented intersection hits the topping.

The choice of glue is critical, it should be flexible and easily removed from feathers. If a mistake is made with Flexament of thinned GOOP a quick wipe with a toluene soaked cotton swap will enable you to try again.

Counterwound thread or I should say pre-counterwound thread. Everyone (?) counter-spins their bobbin in order to flatten the tying thread. Tie enough salmon flies and the constant spinning becomes a nuisance.

The method I use to eliminate this nuisance is: mount the spool of thread in the bobbin. Wind the thread (whatever length you wish) around convenient posts on opposite sides of your tying area. Extend a reasonable length of thread, counterspin the bobbin, reel the counterspun thread back onto the spool. Continue this procedure until all of the thread you wound around the posts is counterwound and reeled in.

There is a bit of finesse involved with this. The length of time you let the bobbin counterspin must be determined by trial and error. Try short lengths of thread at first and you will soon discover your ideal spin. Also, this procedure does not entirely eliminate counterspinning at the vise. Just most of it.

A METHOD FOR MOUNTING A WING ON A SALMON FLY

Wayne Luallen

There are many ways to mount a wing on a typical featherwing in Atlantic Salmon fly. The method shared here is mostly taken from Bill Hunter of New Boston, New Hampshire with some modifications of my own that suit my style.

Possibly the most important part of the wing is the foundation it is to be mounted on. If the foundation is not smooth and level, the wing may twist, buckle or protrude tips upward. The latter is most common with a body that is larger in diameter than the wing platform, for example, a seal body that does not taper off at the throat area.

What must be considered as foundation includes not only the tie-down area for body, tinsel and hackle materials, but also underwing stems and barbs. Voice of experience strongly urges to not cut off underwing waste until the main wing is mounted. If removed in advance, often the main wing will roll forward and down, forcing the tips up and ultimately crumpling what could have been a smooth, even wing, particularly on the left slip. This is due to the thread under pressure sliding suddenly off and forward of the short platform that trimmed underwing butts establishes.

To help achieve a smooth foundation, a flat, untwisted thread is preferable. Wrapping a monocord type thread, such as Danville's Fly-Master 6/0, is easier for me to get flatter than some of the new threads now available. As a right hand tier, 1 must take into account that Fly-Master comes twisted clockwise (when looking down on the bobbin holder from above) to begin with.

Also with every wrap made, the bobbin holder puts an additional clockwise twist into the thread. Running the hanging thread through a pinched thumbnail and finger pad can enhance the appearance of the twist. Counter-spinning the bobbin holder will remove as much twist as is desired. Careful placement of materials that need to be secured can evenly and smoothly be distributed with flat thread wraps. Use as few thread wraps as possible to avoid bulk and lumps. Slightly separated flat, firm wraps are far more secure than multiple wraps directly on top of one another.

Barbs selected that will make up the main wing should be equal in shape, taper and texture. In the wing strip as a whole, both right and left strips should have the same angle at the tip, width at the tip, and width at the mounting point. If similar wing materials are not used on both sides, not only will the wing look out of proportion, but also may not mount properly. Avoid, for instance, using soft, well-tapered barbs of turkey from the middle of the feather on one side and untapered barbs from the tip of the feather on the other. Also note the thickness/texture at the base of the barbs when trimmed. If the right strip is larger and coarser, or finer and smaller than the left, select another feather so they match. If the strip on one side, when cut at the rachis, is 4" long and the other strip is 2" long, beware. The useful part of the 4" barbs when tied in will be in an area of much softer and finer texture and diameter than the 2" barbs.

Another consideration is placement in the wing slip of barbs from various bird species. For example very soft barbs may buckle more easily when mounted than less soft barbs. Barbs from argus tail if mounted at the top of the slip are so ridged that they will pull free at the tip and unmarry as the wing is mounted. This material is more useful from the bottom of the slip up to no more than half way to the top. Golden pheasant center tail if not cleaned and steamed may break apart at most any point of marriage in the slip. This is due to the reduced number of barbules present on barbs of this material when compared to most other bird species. Thus feather preparation and selection is extremely important here (as it is with all materials.). The point is that if a given material does not adapt to a given placement, do not discard it, but rather consider such things as relocation, less barbs of that material, more barbs, and/or mixing with different textures of barbs.

When pairing the married feather strips to mount, be sure to pre-arch the slips individually to match themselves as well as the desired end product. Be certain they are of equal length and width especially at the tip.

As a right hand tier, I hold the slips by their upper edges so that they "cup open" at the bottom, more so toward butts and closing toward tips. Now, arched and cupped, they are lowered down over the underwing and/or body. The slips are held by left index (or middle) finger and thumb at a point such that I can slightly roll my fingers open to accept the tying thread. In other words, the fingers should be very close to where they need to be in securing the wing with thread. In my case, the tips of my fingers will be about even with the eye, blind eye or return loop. It is hard to describe an exact placement. The size and shape of your fingers dictates that, as much as anything. I prefer not to let the slips go once lowered onto the hook. If handled, they become easily misaligned, and one invariably changes its shape as opposed to the other. If mounted with each curved in different arches, it is more difficult to cleanly realign them later.

As to placement of the slips with the hook shank, it is preferable to place them level with the upper two-thirds of the shank and tightly adjacent to the underwing if present. If there is no underwing, it is preferable to place them a bit higher on the shank. Otherwise, due to the outward arch produced by pressure against the hook, the wings will buckle. If a less three-dimensional look is desired, try to keep the wings as much toward the top of the shank as possible. All the above applies whether the hook is blind or loop.

Note the plane of the fingers in relationship to the hook as they hold the wing over the fly body. The more vertical the fingers from a true parallel position with the shank, the higher the wing will arch upward. The more level, the lower the wing will lay.

Everyone's greatest fear comes with the next step. If proper thread placement and smooth thread under controlled, even pressure is maintained and if the platform and underwing (when present) are as previously described, wing mounting should go very smoothly.

At this point it is most important to have the thread at a point as far to the left (for a right hand tier) as you intend for it ever to be from now on. It is unwise to wrap backward over a mounted wing with thread. If you do, don't be surprised if the wing buckles. Be sure the thread is counter-spun so that it is flat. Flat thread will slide easier on the shoulder of the wing than will twisted thread, thus allowing the wing collapse to be smooth and even.

The wing mount is accomplished through a simple series of three "soft captures" and two firm additional wraps slightly forward of the initial three. The first wrap is begun by bringing approximately 2%" of thread up the near side and back at about a 15 degree angle. (The reason for the 2%" is so that all three wraps can be done in a series of flowing motions. You do not want to have to play around with a bobbin holder adjusting thread during this step.) Bring the thread down the far side at the same angle and back to the exact point that it came from, but on the other side of the shank. Next bring the thread under the shank and straight up 90 degrees to the shank. During this process, the thread is placed between the thumb and the near wing slip by first rolling the thumb tip open then closed onto the thread, followed by the same process with the finger on the other side. It is wise to leave just a slight amount of loose thread looping over yet not touching the wing. All the while, the wing slips are held firmly in position. If anything moves from position, start over now. If satisfied with the wing and thread positions, begin to pull the thread straight up under even, constant pressure. DO NOT release pressure on the wing slips, but do slightly roll the fingers back as the thread slides down and forward. Once it is firmly drawn, repeat this process. Then repeat it a third time. These three wraps are almost exactly on top of one another, preferably very slightly progressing forward, never backward. After the third wrap is firmly drawn up, let the bobbin holder hang down the far side, thus removing % of a wrap. Still holding the wing with firm pressure, grasp the butts of the wing and underwing, (which will have now rolled away from you,) with thumb and index of the other hand and bring them back to the original position by twisting them. Do not be afraid to apply what may seem undue pressure. In fact, it helps to work them back and forth a few times, as long as the wing proper is still firmly held. This may loosen the three wraps. If so, remove two and rewrap them without soft loops this time. (Note: the wing has not been released to this point.) Now, somewhat less vigorously, draw back and up the wing butts again. Take two additional secure wraps, separated from the initial three by the distance you wish the head to cover. If the butts slip around again, draw them back up; remove one or both of the most recent wraps and put them on again. (What removing and replacing wraps does is further crush the barbs to better secure them. It also makes for a cleaner and smaller head. Additional wraps on top of these do not add security, only bulk.).

You can now finally remove your hand holding the wing slips, and take a look. Everything should have fallen cleanly into place. If you are not satisfied, remove the five wraps and do it again. Possibly the

wing is too long or perhaps one side was not even with the other. Maybe one side buckled. The wing arch may be too flat or perhaps the wing is too high at the tips. Do not be afraid to remount. A mounted wing is easy to remount, fairly easy to shorten, but not easy to lengthen.

If the wing is too short or badly buckled, a way to start over was shown me by Greg Bevard of Sacramento California: simply steam the wing slips! I have brought a pair back from failure as many as three times this way. Odds are, the problem is the foundation, not the slips, so check that first. If that is not the problem, you can always marry new slips and try, try again.

Once satisfied with position of both slips, again grasp firmly the wing. Now, remove the last two wraps. With very sharp scissors remove the wing and underwing butts exactly where these wraps were once laid. The more vertical the cut, the more ball-like the head. The more angled the cut, the more potential for a tear-drop or tapered head. I generally prefer a more ball-like head, depending on the fly dressing. Some choose not to cut off the butts now, but wait until almost everything is mounted (sides, cheeks, roof, etc.) I think that is risky, since there is just that much more to slip when trimming finally is done.

Once trimmed, while still holding the wing slips, paint water or saliva, but not head cement, onto the remaining stubs up to the point of the first three wraps. Be careful particularly if using water (since it is less viscous than saliva) to not let it wick up into the wing proper. What saliva or water does is slightly soften the barbules on the barbs, allowing them to compress more than if nothing were applied. (The problem encountered when using head cement is that it hardens the butts prematurely, thus not allowing any additional compression and collapse at a later stage in the fly. Also, it may produce rough spots that can catch and fray thread.) Now take two, flat, criss-crossing wraps over the face of the trimmed butts with one additional flat wrap just behind them. This forms the taper that will ultimately shape the head.

Finally, release the wing, view your handiwork, and complete the fly.

A suggested hand position for mounting a feather wing.

In 1985 while teaching a feather wing class, I was asked why my wing after tying on'stayed parallel with the hook shank and the other student’s wings were more vertical. As the instructor, I was expected to have the answer. It goes without saying that the teacher has to know more than the student. In this situation I did not know the answer, but was determined to figure it out. Luckily it did not take long to discover that when tying on the wing slips, the angle I held my fingers over the slips was influential in establishing the ultimate angle that the wing would take in relationship to the body. This, I have since learned, applies when tying any sort of similar feather wing, whether it be a Lead Wing Coachman wet fly or a Black Doctor salmon fly.

Most vise heads have a jaw angle of approximately 30 degrees off horizontal. In teaching, I have found that if the student's vise head can be tilted upward to approach 35-45 degrees, this allows more opportunity to get the heal of the "wing hand" down which in turn allows the fingers gripping the slips to be more parallel with the hook shank. Ultimately this leads to a wing more parallel to the hook shank.

I also encourage the student to grip the wing slips with thumb and middle finger rather than thumb and index finger. Whether the vise head does or does not allow for an increased angle, the use of thumb and middle finger will by itself place the grip on the wing slips more parallel to the hook shank than thumb and index can. To prove this place the hand that normally holds the wing slips out in a normal position for mounting a wing. Place the index finger against the thumb, then switch the index with the middle finger. Note that the index finger lays at a different plane when compared to that of the thumb, where that the middle finger is in direct apposition with the thumb. (Actually the ring finger is closer still than the middle finger to apposition with the thumb, but there is less strength and dexterity in the former.) The middle finger is also generally more equal in breadth to the thumb than is the index to the thumb. This equality of width allows a more even hold of pressure on the wing slips.

From the lesson I learned several years ago, I now teach control of finger position and an improved equalness of pressure on the wing slips which inturn has eliminated having my students wings at a different plane than the one that I am attempting to teach. If the student chooses to have a parallel wing or a higher wing, it can now be done purposefully rather than by accident. Any wing can be mounted with confidence and in a desirable position as long as the foundation is flat, the various textures of wing strips are properly positioned and married, the thread is properly positioned and pulled, and the hand and fingers are properly positioned to hold the slips.

A CURE FOR SPARSE WINGS

Tom Juracek

When you sit down at the vise you have a number of options facing you regarding the style you use to tie a salmon fly. You can choose high wing, low wing, long, short, just about anything that matches the style of hook the you have selected. But one thing seems to remain constant among today's tyers. How the wing is made up.

No matter the number and quantity of ingredients called for in the dressing, the tyer simply attempts to marry them together and attach them to the hook in gigantic pull of the thread. Maybe the "shoulders" of duck feathers warrant inclusion in the wing proper, all materials seem to be married together and knotted to the hook.

The origination of this style of tying seems to be with Pryce-Tannatt. I am sure there are other historians of the salmon fly who could find references with which I am not familiar, but for the most part Pryce-Tannatt seems to have popularized this style of attaching the wing. I do not believe this it is coincidental that Pryce-Tannatt liked to tie in this style and that the patterns listed in his book also call for significant increases in the amount of wing material in a fly. In order to build a wing of sufficient quantity to look good on a hook and take up the allotted space, a generous amount of material is required if you are going to crush all of it onto the iron at the same time.

If you tie in this style all of the time, you have no doubt encountered the problem of anemic looking wings when you attempt to dress some of the older patterns. Why? Because the older flies were not dressed in this manner and often times do not have sufficient wing ingredients to be tied in this method. Kelson in his magazine articles was supposedly the first to popularize the "mixed" wing style of dressing. While today's tyer may not generally put the wing together in individual strands as suggested by Kelson, the principal idea of marrying the different fibers together and attaching them to the hook all at once continued. Further, if the feathers are not of the required length, they are put on as a second wing outside of the first; the modern shoulder.

Lets address a particular fly, The Captain. I have seen perhaps 3 or 4 examples and I have tied it 3 or 4 times. The same thing invariably happens. The wing is anemic. This is caused by two items. First, there is no butt in the fly. This makes the rear end of the fly less "bulky" than most flies that contain butts. Second, the dressing does not call for an underwing. All wing materials are simply listed. Or are they? (I am treading on some very dangerous ground here!) There is actually a semi-colon within the listing of materials. Does this mean that some materials belong as an underwing and some as the main wing? Remember, underwings are not generally separated from the main wing components in Kelson's listings for patterns.

So how to fix the Captain. First, don't tie the tail veiling in as a single feather laying on top of the crest. Use two feathers back-to-back. Any coincidence to the fact that this is how the fly appears I the plates in Kelson's book? Probably not. Way to coincidental. Using the two feathers backto-back creates the illusion of bulk at the back of the fly and helps fill in the wing area. How many flies do you see today that use two feathers back-to-back as the tail veiling? I see hardly any. Maybe one fly out seventy-five that calls for a tail veiling.

Almost every author of a salmon fly book has addressed tying in two feathers back-to-back as a tail veiling method, yet it seems to have been lost as a method employed by modem tyers. Why? Material hoarding and preservation?

Second, tie a built wing. Oh, I know, we are so concerned with head size that we have elected to ignore old tying methods because the heads end up looking too large. If you can't make the head the size of a period, then your fly belongs in the gutter. There is no reason why the wing components in the Captain can not be separated into a wing and an underwing. Remember, built wings were the only way salmon flies were tied for years. Select one or two materials that will show nicely in the underwing and tie them in. May I suggest the Amherst pheasant and Golden pheasant? Or perhaps, the Peacock wing (which is generally shorter in barb length and may make a nice underwing) and the Amherst pheasant. Having tied in an underwing, now make up a main wing using the remainder of the listed materials.

You can always combine the two suggestions. If you elect to tie two feathers back-to-back as the tail veiling, you have some space to be taken up before the main wing can be extended past the veiling to the tail. Why not take this space with some of the shorter materials called for in the dressing? Maybe the Teal, Pintail and Gallina called for in the dressing should occupy this space rather than being placed on it the "tradional' shoulder position. They are short and they will show nicely. They may be a little difficult to work with, but there are solutions to that problem. Tie in an underwing of Amherst pheasant. Place the shorter feathers alongside the underwing to support them. Then tie in the main wing composed of the remaining materials. Get these to lay just above the duck feathers and you will have a nice wing with plenty of height.

There are a number of other patterns where the same alternatives I have listed here can be employed to your advantage.

One might be the Blue Baron. Here is a pattern that calls for all of four wing materials. Golden pheasant tippets and tail (in strands), and blue and claret Swan. Not a lot of choices or options here for making a wing for a size 4/0 fly. Is there a way around it? Sure! The tail calls for a tipping and Chatterer. Tie I two feathers back-to-back to increase material quantity at the back of the fly. Tie in your tippet strands so that they are sufficiently high to match the height of the tail veiling. Now tie in a wing of roughly a dozen (or more) Golden pheasant fibers for the tail. Finally marry the Swan together and tie this in as the final portion of the wing. That's about three wings for this fly. But you should be able to keep the head in appropriate size because Mallard, Jungle Cock, and a topping are all that remain to be added.

The Dawson. Here is a fly that appears to have a lot of material in the wing, yet can also end up looking thin. We have light and dark Turkey, blue, yellow, and red colored sections, Teal, Gray Mallard, and Golden pheasant tail. Throw out the Mallard and Teal because we will tie them in as shoulders (in deference to Pryce-Tannatt) and we have six materials left. Three strands of each and we have a wing that is only 18 strands high. Not nearly enough for a 2/0 or 3/0 hook. What to do? Well we could increase strand count for some of the materials. But that may alter the complexion of the fly and present an ugly appearance. Do we make an underwing? One is not listed and does not appear to be called for in the dressing. Maybe we should alter the body construction. This fly is a jointed body fly that calls for Indian Crow veilings over a tinsel body. Maybe we should place the body veilings back-to-back. The rear half of the body and the front half of the body both need the veiling placed back-to-back With the simple light blue throat hackle, this will help provide size to the entire fly. Then we could either select certain materials and tie an underwing with them, or tie a wing with all of the materials married together. Either way we have provided bulk to the upper part of the fly by altering the method we used to tie in the body veilings.

Don't always try to force pattern into a tying convention. Explore all of the different methods available to you. Many times, using methods outside the scope of the "modern" salmon fly results in a fly that is much nicer in appearance. And finally, don't be afraid of tying built wing.

WINGS

Segment from Tom's Website

Major Hale, in How to Tie Salmon Flies, stated in the opening paragraph of the chapter on winging flies, "So far every process described is mere child's play compared to it, and continual practice only can make the beginner really efficient."

Before we get into the details of winging, we should set straight the scope of what is to be covered here. I am going to address the built and mixed wing methods of winging. Shoulders, sides, cheeks, toppings, horns and other accouterments of the head of the fly will be found in later instructions. Having set the basis for the topic at hand, let's dive right in. One cannot begin a discussion of winging without first making certain that the reader has a full grasp of the material requirements. Beautiful winging technique can make some materials do what they normally recoil from wishing to do. However, for the beginning and intermediate dresser, judicious use and selection of materials can only make the learning process easier and quicker.

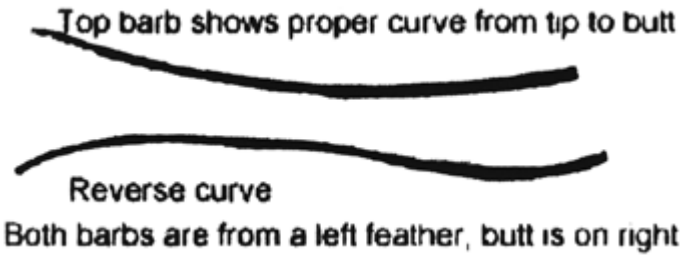
Feathers. Feathers have a unique construction that the dresser makes use of to put together wings. A brief review here would probably be helpful. Grasp a duck breast feather at the butt end. Looking at the feather, one discovers two important points. The feather displays a very high degree of curvature, but at the same time, all barbs are married together. (Quick note on nomenclature: the center stem of the

feather is referred to as the rachis; the fibers flaring from the rachis are called barbs; and the 'fluff that marries the barbs to one another are the barbules. I will try and diligently follow this language throughout this discussion) The only way that these barbs stay married to one another is if the barbs closer to the tip are somehow below the barbs that are near the butt. In fact, this is how the feather is structured. As you move away from the butt of the feather, each barb is set on the rachis slightly above the one t follows on the way to the tip. Pick up a turkey tail. Although this feather display very little curvature compared to the duck breast feather, the feather structure remains the same. Each barb rests slightly above its neighbor towards the tip, and slightly below its neighbor to the butt.

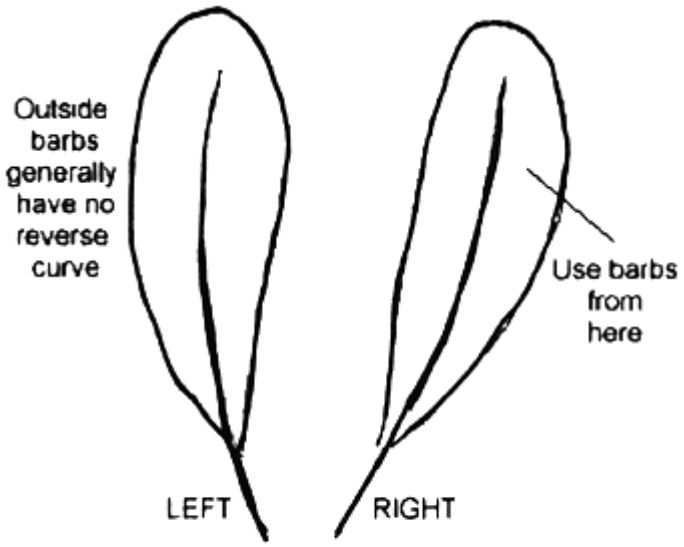
As a second consideration, select a size 12 dry fly trout hook. Set this on the bench. Now select two duck feathers. Take one that is 3 or 4 inches in overall length. Select another that is barely 1 inch in length. Pull back the fuzz at the base of the feather and look at the natural curvature of the barbs. Set them along side the hook and measure out a wing. Note that the very small feather has barbs that have a natural curvature that fits the size of the hook. You would tie in a wing close to the base of the barbs and the feather would provide a natural wing silhouette. Now place the large feather against the hook. Here, if one were to make a wing from this feather, you must tie it on way out towards the tips of the barbs. Also, the barbs at this point are very straight and do not provide a natural curve to the wing. For another example, select two Golden pheasant tippets. One from very high on the cape, another from the very base of the cape. Pull back the barbs on each feather until you have asize that should be used in winging this hook. Note that the very small feather retains the shape of a whole wing fly. The larger feather has very few barbs left to make a wing, and a wing attached with this feather would be very narrow and not at all pleasing.

The purpose behind this discussion is for the reader to recognize that proper feather selection plays an important role in how a wing looks. It also plays an important role in how easily a wing is attached to a hook. Selection of the proper materials to the hook size will help a wing maintain the proper shape and profile.

A final consideration before we begin to marry a wing. Select a barb or two from the turkey tail, down towards the butt end and cut off. If you have available a peacock wing feather, cut a barb or two off this feather. Hold the barbs near one another and look down on them as though viewing them from the tip of the feather from which they came. On the turkey barbs you will almost always see two curves in the feather. The barbs start to curve from the outside towards the inside, but then about halfway down they curve back out. In viewing the peacock barbs, the curvature is in one direction only, from out to in. The turkey feather has what is referred to as a 'reverse curve'. Reverse curves in feathers that are used in wings can make them difficult to marry. It can also make wing shape difficult to maintain. One solution to this problem is to alternate barbs that have strong reverse curves (such as turkey and swan) with feathers that have strong curves (peacock and bustard). In this manner the reverse urve can somewhat cut back to almost eliminated, thus making the wing take on the proper shape. It is also helpful to make certain that the lower barbs in the wing are made of feathers exhibiting a strong curvature.



One more explanation in terminology is in order as we start to get into marrying wings. What is a left andright feather? Here is another diagram that shows the terminology that will be used on these pages.



Outside edges of each feather are used for the wings. Barbs from left feather form wing on near side of right handed tyer. barbs from right feather form far side wing

The feathers shown come from goose shoulders. The best side of the feather is facing the dresser. Generally, the best barbs will be found at the location indicated. Here, the longest barb length, along with the best tips to each barb, combine to form the 'sweet spot' of the feather. On peacock wings, the center third of the leading edge of the feather is the sweet spot. On turkey tails, the leading edge does not always contain barbs long enough for use. In this instance the trailing edge is used and this brings some reverse curve into play. The Golden pheasant tail sweet spot is generally the middle third of the feather. Leading edges in the above diagram are those sides of each feather to the outside of the picture. Trailing edges are the sides of feathers to the inside of the diagram. Center feathers, found in tail and body feathers, are those feathers that exhibit equal shape and barb length on both sides of the rachis.

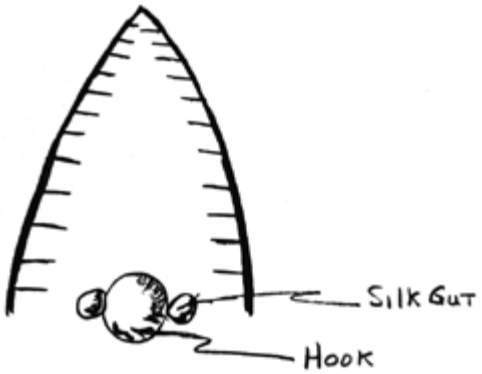
Here are the general steps I follow to form a wing. Select the number of barbs from each material required and cut them off. Form piles of the materials, keeping right sided barbs with other rights, and lefts with their kin. You cannot many lefts to rights because the barbule structure is reversed between the two. To be successful in marrying feathers, you must many rights with other rights and vice versa. Then selecting the lowest barbs to set in the wing with their immediate neighbors, bring the two materials together and align the tips. Once aligned, bring the two materials together, keeping the upper material slightly below the lower material. If you recall from the discussion on feather structure, the upper barbs rest slightly below the lower barbs on the feather. We are duplicating this structure in the wing. Once aligned and put together, stroke the material from butt to tip to marry the two sections. Carefully examine the marriage. Their may be a few spots that did not completely marry. Tapon the edge of the upper section and force it to meet and marry with the lower section. Alternatively, gently roll the entire section back and forth between thumb and forefinger to force the marriage. When starting out, do not work with fewer than three barbs in a section. Marrying single or double barbs to other feathers is best left until you have developed skills and can easily and efficiently marry a wing.

The illustration shows the view from the butt of two sections showing how they are brought together to marry.

The illustration shows a completed set of wings, viewed from below. Note how the lower edges (solid lines) are cupped. But, the top edges (dotted line) meet each other and the wing tips on right are aligned and meet.

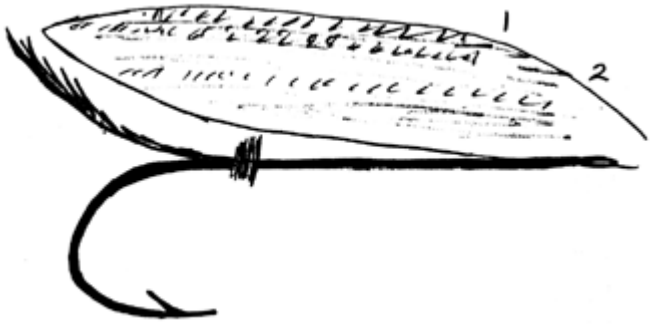
Once a right wing has been made up, complete the same steps with the left wing. Keep your fibers in the same order on both wings as you build them. Also, pay attention to the angle the tips are taking as you build the wing. Try to get the angle and shape of the tips to match the angle of your tail. This will help you fill in the tail space with your wings. Neat tips are one of the focal points of the finished salmon fly. In a full dress pattern, the forward half to third of the wing will probably be covered by materials that follow, sides, cheeks, etc. This leaves the back third of the wing and the wing tips as the focal point for the viewer. Mis-aligned tips and a poor shape to the rear of the wing are one of the most common problems I see. These problems have nothing to do with mounting the wing. Review some of the flies and comments found under the salmon fly button for help in this area.

We are now ready to mount the wing onto the hook shank. The wings are set over the hook shank and measured for the proper length. The lower barbs, as shown below, are set close to the sides of the hook, not on top. This is one of the great fables that has been perpetuated on fly dressers for years. It is almost impossible to set wings directly on top of the hook shank with each of the barbs directly on top of one another. Feathers are not naturally shaped in this manner, as we discussed earlier. Yet training manuals have for years shown two slips, side-by-side, completely vertical over the hook shank, prepared to be tied down. This leads to wing splitting, twisting and collapse. It is time to set the record straight. As another example, hold two wing feathers from a duck back to back. Note that if you keep the tips and top edges together there is a natural tendency for the feathers to separate towards the butts. If you were to place these two feathers over a hook so that a couple of sections were rmoved to wings, look at the shape and angle the sections take naturally relative to the hook. (This would be holding the rachis vertical with the barbs aligned as though they were to become wings on the fly). This is the same shape we want to produce with our wing. The upper barbs are closer together, not vertical with the lower barbs that would form the wing. In the diagram below, note where each barb rests relative to the hook shank. The objective is to bring each barb straight down onto the shank in the position shown. Thus, the lowest barbs rest somewhat on the side of the shank and the top barbs come straight down onto the middle of the shank. (Or in this case, directly between the shank and the return). Barbs in between assume their relative and proper position. Should the wing split near the thread, as long as the barbs are mounted in their proper position, the wing will remain married and will fish correctly.



The illustration is the front view of wings in position to be mounted on the hook. Note that the barbs on the bottom are wider that those on top. In keeping with the structure of the barbs found on the feather. Bottom edges are roughly parallel to the hook shank.

Once the wings are in proper position, the thread is brought up and over the wings. It is brought round the underside of the shank and directly straight up. No tension has been applied to the thread in an attempt to mount the wing at this point. In the diagram below, the thread would be positioned over the point shown by number 1.



Note in this diagram how the tips of the wings have been married and set to match the angle and shape of the tail. Please also note that the wings have received a "humping" before being mounted so that the upper edge is not straight. Rather it forms a pleasing curve from the front of the fly to the rear.

With the thread over position 1, SLOWLY but forcefully pull straight up to mount the wing to the hook. The most common error I see from dressers at this point is to snap the wing down. On a standard size 4 salmon iron, it should take from 4 to 5 seconds to completely tighten the thread and mount the wing. DO NOT GO TOO FAST! As the thread is pulled tight, it should be allowed to slide down the wing. Point 2 in the diagram represents the point on the upper barb that will be at the intersection of the hook shank and the thread. Note that point 1 is not that location. If point 1 were the location of the thread hook intersection (and I am referring here to a point after the thread has been tightened), the wing would stand straight up and not follow the body lines at all. Point 2 represents the location that after the thread is pulled taut, the upper edge of the wing will retain exactly the shape it was in when set above the hook shank prior to mounting. Finally, the butt ends of the wings were allowed to fall be the hook shank prior to mounting. After taking 5 turns of thread, HEADWARDS ONLY, grasp the butts and force them up on the top and sides of the hook shank. Refer back to the diagram that shows the wings forming a tent shape over the hook shank. This shape should still clearly be evident in the wings, particularly around the rear butt area of the fly. In the 'tent' diagram, most of the edges of the barbs are shown facing in a downward direction. When completely mounted these edges should be facing flat to slightly upwards (for those on the sides of the hook shank).

Note in the illustration that each barb is collapsed straight down onto its appropriate spot on top of the hook

Here are some additional pointers:

Again, this procedure is not a quick one. Allow the wing to collapse onto the hook shank in a slow natural manner.

The grasp with the left hand must be firm, but not overwhelming. Otherwise the thread will not slide from point 1 to point 2.

Those golden pheasant tail fibers that have so few barbules that they do not wish to marry with other fibers are perfect for the top most section of the wing. With few barbules the tread slides easily from point 1 to point 2.

Barbs want to many to one another. If you are having difficulty getting two sections to marry, make certain you are marrying lefts with their fellow lefts not with an obstinate right. Also, check to see that your barbs are not twisted. If your wing material has net been properly stored, curves and twists may be present in the barbs. This makes marriage much more difficult.

Watch the angle of departure the wing takes from the hook shank. If you have a roof, topping and other items to go over the wing, the angle should be slightly lower than if the wing is to be left as is.

Finally, PRACTICE. No amount of reading or technique that I discuss here will ultimately prove to be a substitute for practice. Get a bare hook, some turkey tail feathers and mount some wings. If you start with a standard size 4 hook, start mounting wings that are 8 or 9 barbs high. Gradually work your way until you can mount a wing that is 18 or 19 barbs in width. Pay close attention to how each wing collapsed and what the problem was. Work on each step outlined here until the wing is correct.

The generally accepted difference in modem fly dressing between built and mixed wings has to do with the underwing. If the underwing is made up of barbs and mounted in a fashion similar to the main wing (say using white tipped turkey) then the wing is considered to be built. If the underwing is made up of whole feathers (tippets) or parts of other feathers (say tippets in strands) then the wing is considered to be a mixed wing. Mixed wings have other variations and definitions based upon the author writing the text. Kelson had his own definition and style. Clumps of feathers bound to the hook were considered mixed wings.

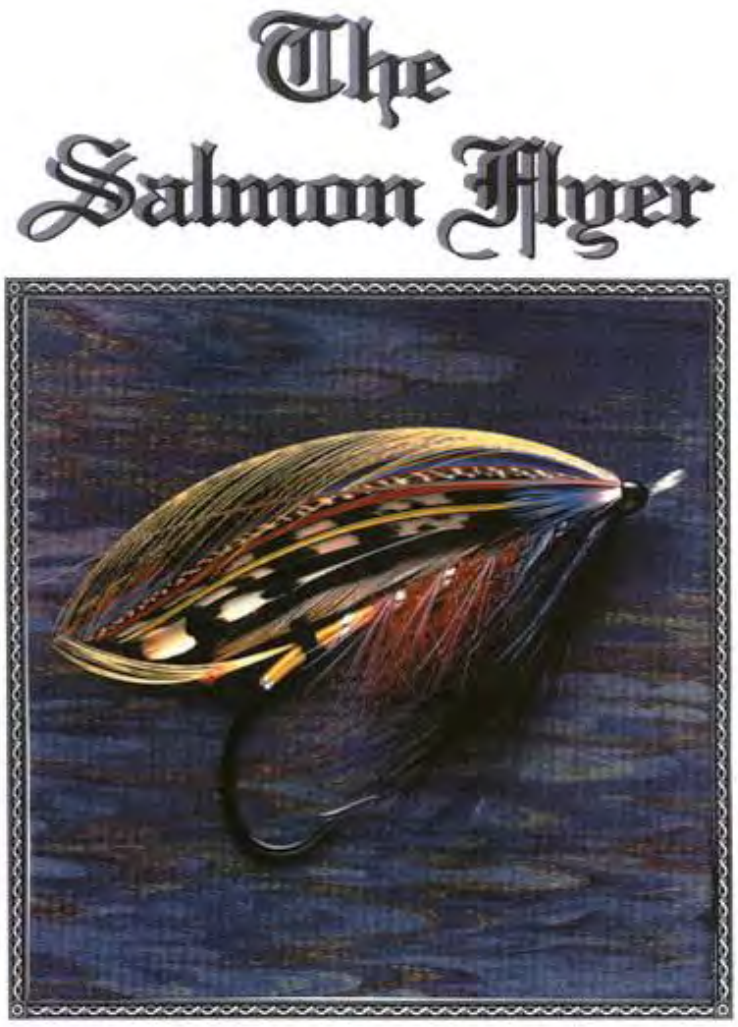
Modem dressers have basically simplified the built wing to the point where it does not differ much from the mixed wing. Originally the built wing would have had 5 or 6 different 'wings' attached to the hook. In a Jock Scott for example, the white tipped turkey would be wing one, bustard and golden pheasant wing two, the colored swan wing three, the woodduck and pintail wing four, and so on. This method leads to large heads because many winds of thread are made in attaching each of the different wings. It also becomes more difficult to get each section to follow the contour of the prior section and keep the wing neat and orderly. As a result, built wings are generally made of only two wings, the underwing and the main wing. The main wing being comprised of married barbs of all the materials called for in the dressing except the one material specified for the underwing (usually white tipped turkey tail).

Review some of the other pages in this site for additional tips. There is a discussion of winging on the Dee strip wing page and under the Champion. Some additional hints may be found there.

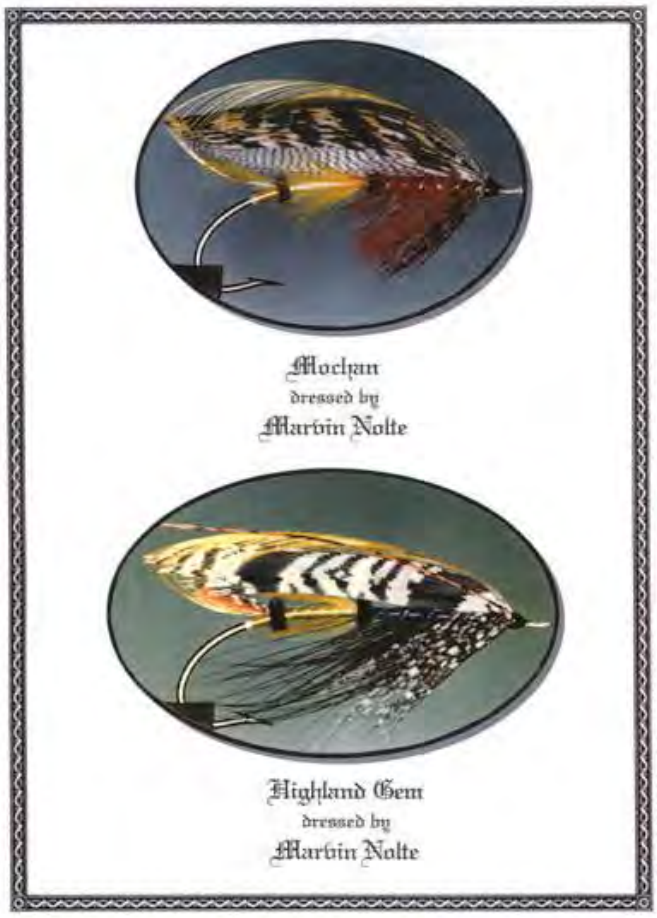
Winging is not a technique that lends itself well to written instruction. I have tried to cover some of the important points here that I usually see left out of other tying texts. I have assumed that the reader has

access to other descriptions of winging flies and will be able to incorporate what I have discussed here with instructions found in the published instruction books. That being said, with enough practice, one should find that winging becomes fairly straight forward and not any more difficult that other techniques. It is difficult to overemphasize the amount of practice required. I would suggest that if one were seriously determined to dress salmon flies, that one purchase an entire set of duck wings, grab a size 12 salmon hook, and practice mounting wings until you have used up the entire set of duck wings. Careful practice and mounting of 80 to 100 wings will pay immense dividends when it comes time to mount married wings that are half an inch high. Plus, duck wings are inexpensive. Don't practice with what might be the best pair of turkey tails you will ever see. Use some materials that are readily obtainable and relatively inexpensive. Absolutely do not practice with any material that comes off of a rare bird.

The Salmon Flyer
Vol. 10 - No. 3, Summer, 1998



MCINTYRE
Dressed by Wayne Luallen



The Salmon Flyer
Vol. 10 - No. 4, Autumn, 1998

FLOOD TIDE
Dressed by Mark Ketelsen

DRESSING FLIES WITHOUT A VISE

John Betts

Mr. Harrang's recent article considering some of the problems of producing flies hand tied, in the original sense of the word, is valuable for attention it brings to a neglected area of fly dressing. I know of only a handful of people, one in the U.K., four in the U.S. and one in Sweden who tie flies in this manner with regularity.

Until recently the Rogan studio in Ireland tied its entire inventory of trout and salmon flies this way. They were established in the 1830s. Up until the early 1900s, this practice was all that not unusual, after that, however, they stood alone. I do not know if they are still in business.

In Sweden, Sven Olaf Hard produces salmon flies professionally without a vise, making his work unique in the world. Hard accomplishes this with severe life-long tremors in his hands. His greatest wish is to serve his wife a cup of tea, which he has never been able to do without spilling the entire contents. His work is as fine and beautiful as any produced today. His flies appear to include tying a properly sized snell along the full length of the underside of the shank. This treatment of the body of the fly may be much more significant than we realize.

Along with Hard is Donald Downs of Great Britain, Marvin Nolte, Nick Chiovitti, Darwin Atkin, and myself. Marvin and I started independently of one another, both feeling that it was something we needed to know about. My own flies range from full dressed salmon flies to trout dry and wet flies down to size 24. These are the flies I use; the patterns range from contemporary back to the 17" century. After what must number well over a thousand flies certain characteristics of hand tying have become apparent. Some of them will follow.

I have not found any thread equal to Pearsall's Gossamer. It is also superior for flies tied in a vise. Thread color is important particularly when it is properly combined with dubbing to produce the color of the body. The only exception to Pearsall's is size A silk sewing thread which I use in two of or all three of the flies to secure the snell to large salmon flies. The colors of silk, unlike any synthetic are vivid and bright, and have a sheen that is unequalled. Because Gossamer is a different size from modern threads, it has a different effect on materials and the way they are secured. Instructions for using silk were pretty much gone by 1950. Today instructions, while similar in contents make no mention of the fact that they originated with hand held flies and waxed silk thread.

In hand dressing the most critical operation is waxing he thread properly The bobbin has basically eliminated wax by holding the thread under tension, where it, the bobbin, hangs by its weight underneath the fly between operations. Regardless of the kind of thread being used, waxing a length and re-rolling it on the bobbin before it is used will always tie better flies.

Wax is a form of cement and the thread is a delivery system. Super strong super fine threads are no match for well waxed silk. Because of the new and tiny diameters the poor technique of extra turns, that do not create bulk, has gone unpenalized. Having tied with a number of formulae, both old and new, Marvin Nolte's wax is far and away the best. In his own words, it is a "manly" wax.

With a full snell included, the body cannot avoid being a good deal thicker. There is no doubt that this bulk formed a different kind of platform than we are now using for the attachments of the wings, hackle, etc. Further that the visual appearance of this mass contributed consciously and unconsciously to the amounts and proportions of materials used in all of the other parts of the fly, that is to say the entire pattern.

With the introduction of the eyed hook, the diameter of the body was suddenly and automatically reduced. On today's salmon flies bodies of anemic proportions manifest this. The same anemia was transferred wholesale to today's "exhibition" flies dressed on blind-eyed hooks. The "snell" on these is now a mere snippet of its former self. Oddly enough on modern trout flies the elimination of the snell created the opportunity for very lightly dressed bodies which today's studies have ignored keeping flies at robust proportions.

While the body has become skeletal the same metamorphosis has not occurred in areas like the tails, hackles, and wings. They are as they used to be, and loudly discussed and proclaimed for being so.

Looking at what are considered today's standards of excellence, one could observe that two different people worked on the fly. One on the body with modern notions, and the other on the rest of the fly with older "traditional" ideas. If the body dimensions have been summarily changed shouldn't those on the rest of the fly as well? To not do so is trying to play on both sides of the street. In earlier functional designs the whole appearance of the fly evokes a sense, at least in me, that all of the parts belong together in terms of size, visual, and tactile mass.

Both Mr. Kelson's book as well as that of Pryce-Tannatt are hand tying books, although those who stand today with their right hand upon them are noticeably silent on that point. I'd bet that those famous exhibition flies of George Kelson's have snells that run the full length of the body. The precise delicacy of modern exhibition flies would never have passed muster on fully snelled hooks.

Why is overhead incandescent and/or fluorescent lighting considered "proper?" Tyers years ago used some forms of globe, mirrors, candle and/or flame or just plain daylight. The use of a globe produces a bright light, and sunlight even more so. F. M. Halford went to considerable trouble to create a fluid for his globe that would cause a source, a flame, to be converted to something as close to natural light as possible. He did this in order to keep his colors accurate after the sun went down. The admonition of judging your colors in natural light is, after centuries, still repeated today. Twenty odd years later, after the book containing the section on light was published, he electrified his home and used a standard 8 candle power bulb (about 30 watts). He was quite pleased with the results.

Gas lighting was available in the early 1800s. It was dim, dangerous, noxious, and toxic. This is not surprising when one sees how it was made and delivered. If you lived on the gas line the piping could be any number of things like varnished silk tubing or discarded musket barrels from the Napoleonic Wars. OSHA would have had a field day. If you didn't live on the line and were well off you could install your own homeowner's coal roaster and its accessories. One look at these and a concept of what was entailed in using one would send any prudent person back to daylight for everything that needed light.

The particular quality of sunlight is a unique part of all of the colors and images found in the natural world, and for that reason is the only light to judge your colors under. It will impart to the colors of fly tying materials qualities that which under any other type of illumination remain hidden. It has another characteristic in that most of the time it is available it is coming to us at an oblique angle. This is accentuated in hand dressing by the infinite number of positions that the fly can be held in during assembly, and compounded by the constant movement of the sun throughout the course of the day. The sun will illuminate the surface and interior of the fly in ways that cannot be seen when the fly is held stationary in a vise under a stationary artificial lamp. The properties of natural light and its manipulation by the fly dresser had to have been an influence on the choice of materials-to develop or subdue them, and so on. All of this will affect the resultant design.

Tyers had to position themselves so that the light will illuminate the work but not cast a shadow from their body or hands. This positioning had, of course, to be adjusted during the entire year. Tying in your hands will suddenly impart new insight into what you may have been doing by rote or simply following instructions.

The great fly patterns are probably in all cases symptoms of an evolutionary process, and did not spring fully clothed from the first attempt. The individuals who developed them, whether they were professionals or not usually possessed a depth of comprehension regarding their subject; a sense that comes from keen observation, deliberate study and thought, and sustained practice.

Finally here is a list of what some of us have found to be a few of the advantages in hand tying. Several have already been mentioned.

1. Illustration and instruction in the older books will make more sense. If the illustration shows the hook bend to the right instead of the. left, it usually means to reverse your hold to the shank and for that operation. If the hook is upside down it usually suggests that you hold it that way.

2. Stout bodies holding a full snell are easier to hold than thin ones.

3. You can tell as soon as you touch the fly whether the material in place is too much or too little, tight or loose. Gold miners will tell you "When in doubt, it ain't". If it feels wrong it is wrong. This tactile part of tying becomes a large part of technique, as most of your work is covered or touched by your hand during the processes. It is a part completely missing when a vise is used.

4. One need not be in any particular position to dress a fly. You can change your position and that relative to the light and the fly at any time. Comfort is important. If you don't think so put a golf ball under one side of your bottom, and sit down at your vise to tie a dozen simple two part flies like Brown Hackle Peacocks. No stationary vise ever allowed this kind of freedom. Both Marvin and I feel that tying away the hours in a comfortable chair is very therapeutic.

5. There is no need to be compulsively precise, there never was anyway. Constantly touching the materials has its effect and will give the fly a look that cannot be had any other way; no doubt contributing to the overall design from yet another source. I'm quite sure that many of the adjustments made in design were a result of how materials appeared after they had been secured by hand. These same designs are now faithfully copied by today's "traditionalists" who, when emphasizing the size of the head, quality and authenticity of the materials, style and source of the hook, etc., are avoiding the inclusion of a full snell and the fact that the design that they're responding to originated in someone's fingers with a full snell. The flies they are copying were the standards of excellence. It is rare that I see a new fly that looks as if it had been touched by a person. In my experience this is a loss. The human hand is the greatest tool ever developed, and its mark is truly unique.

6. Nolte has suggested that noncompressive dubbing for both trout and salmon flies became, because of the pressure between the thumb and forefinger, a necessity. Matte finished donkey and monkey were used, but had no where near the appeal in and out of the water of the shinier materials such as hog's wool, mohair, seal and "skunk"go look it up.

7. The materials that were used for wings, tails, toppings, roofing, hackle and so on had to be able to survive handling. The selection of materials that were durable was every bit as critical as it was for appearance.

8. Silk floss can be put on without leaving a mark on it. Nolte suggests this to be done by rotating both the hook and the floss at the same time. it can be wound as evenly as it ever was in a vise, and a lot faster.

9. Bobbins are a nuisance. A 15" piece of thread is plenty long enough. it takes about four pieces to complete a 210 salmon fly. I am excluding the thread needed to secure a full snell.

10. Hackle pliers are fine for hackles, as well as for a pendant weight to hold something under slight tension while it is being tied off.

11. THE MOST COMMON MISTAKE MADE IS HOLDING THE HOOK TOO TIGHTLY. How and where you hold it is much more important than the firmness of your grip, which when overdone will ruin your materials. Because your hands are covering or in close proximity to your work, hand tying lends itself to being thoughtful about every turn of thread and its tightness. For a number of years I made my living tying flies professionally, and as careful as I was I was never as thrifty using a vise as I am with my fingers.

12. In hand tying, it is essential to plan the fly before you tie it. With a vise you can get away without doing it-for a while. Eventually it will show in your work.

13. In concrete terms the preceding means to first lay out everything you're going to use in a useful sequence. Many of the old books are quite clear on this. Today this is forgotten if it is every considered in the first place.

Maybe everybody knows enough and they no longer need to do it.

14. If you use a vise the space age, ram jet, belch fire steel in jaws is a lot of hype considering how far your finger and thumb are from ever becoming that. More useful would be replaceable brass or leather jaw liners.

15. Marvin Nolte has suggested that we are losing a resource which in all likelihood will not be replaced in our lifetime if ever. There are probably fewer professional production tyers working in this country, on the Continent and in the British Isles than there were 75 to 100 years ago. It is from them that much of our knowledge concerning procedure and materials has come. They had to make a living and that automatically adjusted the manner in which they did things. Who will fill the gap? Most of the flies tied today for the market are produced in countries that have no tradition of northern European field sports.

16. The people who learn hand dressing with the greatest ease are those who do not resist gaps in their knowledge. Most often these are people from areas with few fly fishing resources, beginners, and women. Those with the greatest difficulty are "experts" or "advanced" tyers.

17. Hand tying reinforces the need for a sensible realistic approach to fly dressing, and will in very little time produce the most elegant flies you've ever tied on a regular basis.

THE WING SETTER

Charlie Chute

One of the most difficult problems in tying classic Atlantic salmon flies is the tying on of the main wing, especially in the larger sizes 6/0 to 10/0. Here are two descriptions that are used extensively today. Some have mixed success with one or the other.

Hold the wing with the left hand over the tying-in-spot. Bring the thread up between your thumb and near side of the wing. Take it over the wing leaving a loop above. Bring the thread down between the far side wing and forefinger. At this point you can draw the thread down brining the wing down on the top of the hook. Or, you can continue to take the thread under the bottom of the hook and up between the thumb and wing and tighten. With an upward pull. The latter being the better of the two techniques. The principles of these methods being sound for flies 5/0 and under. They have a tendency to disarrange larger wings. Also, you would break the thread even 3/0. When the thread is rotating in one direction it will draw the win over causing it to tilt; if not immediately, at a later date. You will see this happening in framed flies. The wing will always tilt away from the tyer. We have to go back to the land that bred the Guady Salmon Fly now known as the Classic. On the Shannon they used to attch a button to the side of a table. Remember there were no vises and the flies were held in the hand. They would take a few turns of thread around the bottom and bring it up over the wing and reattach it to the button. They would then lift the hook upwards which in turn would set the wing on top of the hook. They would secure the wing with the independent tying thread which was held in catch. The Wing Setter was born form this idea. The technique in Kelson's Book "The Salmon Fly," Page was devised by Francis Gribble. Gribble explained in his notes to Kelson, by drawing the tying silk with equal tension on either side and taking care that the same amount of material were on each side of the wing. The fold that is caused resulting in the wing splitting may be avoided. Of the two older techniques the button method is the best. I have tried both techniques. You would need rubber fingers with Gribble's method.

In Figure 1, you will see a weigh (7 to 8 oz.) made of metal. I would use this weight for hook sizes 6/0 to 10/0. Protruding from the weight is some ridged tapered wire (piano wire) that is held in position with a screw. At this moment your thread and bobbin are hanging plumb after tying on the last piece of material. There should be about an 1/8 of an inch left between the thread and the out eye. Now tilt the hook upwards, say about 25% and relock your vise. You will find by angling the hook in this manner it will prevent the Wing Setter from slipping off the wing butts when you release your hand to wind the thread.

Figure 2 (Method #1)

I recommend the following technique in mounting the wing of all sizes of flies. Position your wing over the tying-in spot. The tying-in spot is where the last turn of thread was wound tight against the last piece of material. Holding the wing in your right hand position it for length that is just inside the tip of the tail. Now grasp the wing and the upper half of the hook with your left hand. Your fingertips should be directly over the tying thread. With your right hand start bringing the wing down to the tying-in spot. Releasing the fingertips slightly does this but still keeping a firm hold with the left fingers. This creates that desirable hump which is so admired. The wing should be about 2/3 down to the tying-in spot. Now slip the Wing Setter over the butt ends and up to the fingertips. Squeeze the wire against the hook sides and then pull down. Do not pull down until you have come in contact with the side of the hook. This prevents the lower fibers from being pulled down too far nd separating. Tie in the wing with 5 or 6 turns. Three turns headward and return with three to the base of the wing. Before cutting the butts apply a couple of beads of water to the tying-in area and leave for a few minutes. Grasp the wing and hook and unwind the last 3 or 4 turns of thread and take an upward pull. This will further bind the wing to the hook. Secure and finish with 3 or 4 turns of threads.

Figure 2 (Method #2)

You can also try the following method. Position the wing with the right hand. Grasp as before with the left hand but with the finger tips positioned closer to the eye and beyond the tying-in thread. Slip the wing setter over the butt ends and between the finger tips of the left hand. At the same time take the butts in the idle hand which will control them. As you let the Wing Setter slide through the finger tips, bring the wing down on the hook. Repeat as above to secure wing.

Mallard can be a problem at times. Hump the mallard to the shape of the main wing. Position the mallard strip over the wing and use Method #1. Do not squeeze the wire against the sides of the hook but evenly bring down the Wing Setter. Secure with 3 turns of thread. If you don't succeed at first, practice will help you master the above techniques. Also, if you succeed, please pass the information on so others can enjoy tying the Classics. Reverse all explanations for left hand tyers.

Figure 1

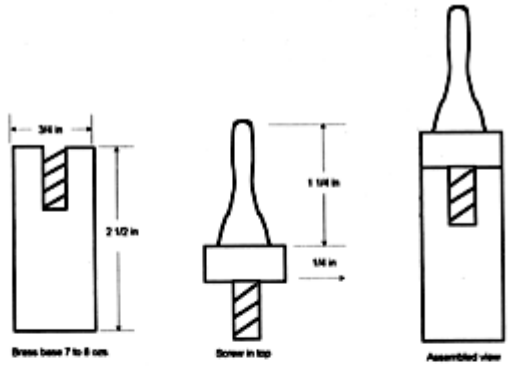
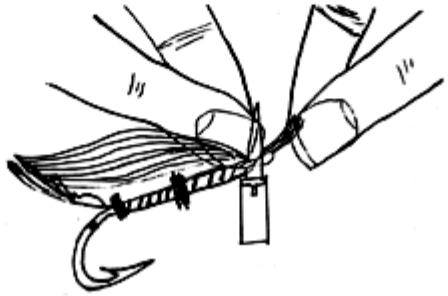


Figure 2

Figure 3



THREADS TO CONSIDER FOR TYING CLASIC ATLANTIC SALMON FLIES

Christopher Helm

In the 1996 summer issue of the Fly Tyer, Bill Merg and I co-authored an article on the subject of thread. The article appeared again in the November/ December issue of the British publication Fly Fishing and Fly Tying with a couple of additional threads added to the data. We worked on this article for about one year including all the research and testing of 72 different fly tieing threads.

The subject of thread strength vs. Size, and the accuracy of the numbering system (3/0, 6/0, 8/0, etc.) used by distributors and manufacturers had long aroused my curiosity. Based on my experience in

using a variety of thread brands and sizes I didn't think the assigned size numbers were comparatively accurate. I thought that some manufacturers/distributors were using the good old "approximate" system. Our tests proved that three is no standardization in fly tieing thread size. Perhaps this variation was a case of oneupsmanship to try to achieve an advantage in the marketplace. Those making these decisions also may have felt the use of denier would not have been readily understood or too confusing for the customer. Bill Merg has subsequently published another article in the summer issue of Fly Tyer proposing to the industry a method for standardizing thread. I wouldn't hold my breath waiting for the industry to follow his recommendations. I think we will see the dinosaurs return before that happens!

In the textile industry denier is the standard method for measuring thread. Actually, there are a number of denier definitions, however, the one most commonly used is the weight of one gram for each 9,000 meters of thread. For example, Danville's 6/0, a commonly used thread for salmon flies, is rated at 70 denier. WAPSI Fly, Inc. is introducing two new threads in the fall of 1998 called "Ultra Thread". The smaller of these two threads that would be suitable for salmon flies has a denier rating of 70 as well. It is, however, five ounces stronger that 610 Danville. WAPSI is using the denier system to describe the new thread size rather that the traditional number system. Tom Schmuecker of WAPSI is trying to put some sense into thread sizing. The "Ultra Thread" is described later in this article.

Most of the threads used in fly tying today are made of nylon or polyester. Nylon has a little more stretch than polyester. I have never had any preference for one over the other. There are also a few threads made of Dyneema (Spun gel polyethylene) that also may be suitable for salmon flies. Even though these Dyneema threads are of the suitable thickness or fineness, plus they lay flat, their strength is well beyond what is needed to tie classic or even hair wing salmon patterns.

Waxed vs. Unwaxed thread always generates some discussion among salmon tiers. I have not found one to be particularly better than the other, but I've spoken to several tiers who prefer the waxed version because there is far less change of the thread fraying. In the original thread article Kent Helvie, a well know Northwestern steelhead and salmon tier, is quoted as saying that he prefers the unwaxed 6/0 Danville because it spreads better. Different threads have different amounts of wax added depending on the process used during manufacturing. The content of the wax varies as well. Based on my experience some are noticeably more waxed than other. I don't find that particularly disturbing other than the lower part of the bobbin tube is clogged with wax from time to time. The choice of waxed vs. Unwaxed thread is more of a personal choice.

For salmon tieing there are only two types of thread construction that meet the all-important criteria of laying flat. Those two types are the semi-twisted and flat, with most falling into the semitwisted category. The semi-twisted thread can be flattened by counter spinning the bobbin (right handed tier).

Until the 1950's silk thread was the only choice readily available for tieing any type of fly. With the invention of nylon thread, silk quickly lost ground to the newcomer and now very little silk is used. There perhaps are a few exceptions; those who are too stubborn to change or ant to replicate with great authenticity. Danville and Pearsall's still distribute silk tieing thread. In the tests that we conducted only the Danville was tested which is rated as 2/0 in size. This flat silk thread is twice the thickness of Danville 6/0 and also about twice as strong. The thread comes on 50-yard spools and the available colors are black, white, and red. It is a good idea to wax the thread to preserve it, even if you don't get the flies wet. Danville will not continue to carry the silk thread once their current supply is exhausted. There is not sufficient demand and the cost of restocking is too high.

Danville 6/0 has long been the choice of many tiers. I suspect this may be due in some part to being first on the scene. It has the characteristics required by the vast majority of salmon tiers. The most popular colors are primrose, black, white, and red. It is available in waxed and unwaxed versions. The thickness of 6/0 Danville is 1.5 (in thousands) and it has a breaking strength of 11 oz.

The following threads are relatively new on the fly tieing scene, particularly in relation to Danville products. Several years ago Gudebrod introduced fly tieing thread on a spool that is about 2" long. The elongated spool holds 225 years of thread. This spool required a special bobbin that was made available by Gudebrod, and later a multipurpose bobbin was introduced by Bernie Griffin of Griffin Enterprises. Frankly, the decision to go with that spool was a mistake. Even though the product is excellent the spools never caught on. These spools will eventually be phased out.

Gudebrod has since introduced a standard spool (100 yards) which is compatible with most bobbins. The only bobbin that it will not fit without modification is the Rite© Adjustable bobbin. That problem is easily remedied by reaming out the spool center with a 0.295 drill bit.

The two Gudebrod threads that I find work well for salmon flies are the 8/0 and 10/0. The 8/0 has a thickness of 1.8 (1000ths) and a breaking strength of 15 ozs. It is made of polyester, is moderately waxed, and flattens beautifully. In addition to the standard colors, black and white it is available in over 12 different colors that match the Borger Color System. The 10/0 is a real sleeper since the size number I believe is incorrect. It is actually more like a 16/0. The thickness is 1.0(1000ths) and has a breaking strength of 9 ozs. It is 1/3 finer than Danville 6/0 yet only 2 ozs less in strength. However, the strength is more than adequate to tie salmon flies. If you want minimal bulk and absolute slimness it tieing buts and bodies this is the thread to try. It lays very flat and can be spread. It is also made of polyester and is moderately waxed which I believe is essential to reduce fraying with thread this fine. The 10/0 comes on the standard 100-yard spools and is available in seven different colors.

Giorgio Benecchi Products of Italy markets three semi-twisted unwaxed threads in sizes 810, 10/0 and 12/0. Of these the 12/0 seems well suited to tieing salmon flies. It does lay flat and is the same size and strength as Gudebrod 8/0. This is a good example of how confusing the sizing can be. It is available in 100-meter spools in over 12 different colors. The 10/0 thread is only a fraction thicker than the 12/0, yet is 7ozs stronger. It is available in all the basic colors.

England's Gordon Griffiths introduced a new thread a couple of years ago titled "Sheer Ultra Fine" thread with a size rating of 1410. Our tests indicate that this thread is the same size and strength as Benecchi 12/0 and Gudebrod 8/0. It is lightly waxed polyester and is available in ten different colors.

The WAPSI "Ultra Thread" I mentioned earlier will be available in October 1998. It is available in two sizes, 70 denier and 140 denier. The 70 denier has a breaking strength of 13 ozs and has a thickness of 1.1 (1000ths). The 140 denier has a breaking strength of Of 21bs. 2ozs., and it has a thickness of 1.6(1000ths) or about 13ozs less than Danville's Flat Waxed Nylon. As another comparison Gudebrod 6/0 has a breaking strength of 1lb 15 ozs. The test of the new WAPSI threads were done by Bill Merg in February 1998 using the same method as was used for all of the other thread.

The "Ultra Thread" is made of nylon and has more stretch than I have ever seen in any thread. I would estimate the stretch to be 10%. It is definitely a great thread for the heavy-handed tier. Of course, there are no heavy-handed salmon fly tiers!! It certainty provides a safety margin. It has only two twists per inch and will lay absolutely flat. I have thoroughly tested this thread and am willing to say it can easily substitute for floss on your fishing flies. Even though both sizes are lightly waxed, they are subject to separation and fraying if not used carefully. But, the advantages of this new thread far outweigh any disadvantages. The colors are brilliant. The 70 denier "Ultra Thread" (red cap end for easy thread tag storage) is being made available in sixteen different colors. The 140 denier thread is being made in thirteen different colors.

Uni-Products of Canada has recently introduced a new fine thread ("Midge" marked on the label) that falls into a similar category of the Gudebrod 10/0. It is a 40 denier thread, unwaxed, available only in translucent white on a 200 yard spool. I have tested it and did a comparison with Gudebrod 10./0. Under a 21/2X magnifier both threads appear to be the same. The only noticeable difference is the UNI seems to have a little more stretch. The flattening and spreading characteristics of the UNI 17/0 is the same as the Gudebrod 1010.

The Dyneema (spun gel polyethylene) threads which could be used for salmon flies include Dynacord 8n (Uni-Products markets the same thread unde the name Uni-Cord), Roman Moser Powersilk, and Benecchi Ultra Strong thread. These threads are incredibly strong for their size. All of these threads are designated as flat and they spread very nicely. Dynacord is lightly waxed, and Benecchi and Roman Moser are not waxed. All come on standard spools and hold 50 yards of thread. They are three to four times more costly that the other threads discussed earlier.

Dynacord 8/0 has a breaking strength of 2lbs. 13 ozs. And its size is 1.0 (1000ths). Compare that with Gudebrod (10/0 thread that is the same size with 9 ozs. Of breaking strength. Roman Moser Powersilk thickness is 1.3(1000ths) with a breaking strength of 2lbs. 6ozs. We have not tested the Benecchi Ultra Strong thread. But, I can say with a great deal of certainty, after using almost an entire spool, that its strength is comparable to the other two. It probably isn't necessary to use a thread this strong in tying

classic salmon patterns. But, there may be a few tiers that feel the extras strength would be an advantage in certain situation.

With the continued growth of general fly tying we are likely to see more new threads come on the market in the future that may be used by salmon fly tier. I am a great believer in trying new products to see if they are better that what I am currently suing. If the new product is better, I usually don't hesitate to add the thread to my over-crowed inventory. In my own general tying and salmon tying I use Gudebrod and Benecchi threads. No doubt there will be certain situations were I will use the Ultra thread. These three brands provided at least nine different breaking strengths/sizes and a rainbow of colors. For hair bugs I find the Dynacord 310 to be unbeatable with a breaking strength of 7Lbs. 9ozs.

I think you will be pleasantly surprised with the performance of the threads I have described. Give them a try for your salmon fly tying as well as trout flies. I doubt if you will be disappointed. If you need more information on any of these thread, or have questions about other threads, please give me a call.

Editor's note: Chris has recently started to market a number of high quality materials for tying classic salmon flies. If you are in need please give Chris all call.

The Salmon Flyer
Vol. 11 - No. 1, Winter, 1999

SNOWIES #2 FOR LOCH NESS
Dressed by Flemming Dam Nielsen

FROM JUDY LEHMBERG'S COLLECTION

MATERIALS PREPARATION AND STORAGE

Wayne Luallen

Feather wing Atlantic Salmon flies, we will all agree, require a reasonable amount of dexterity. But many of us do not realize that even when given the very finest dexterity, only mediocrity will come from the vise of an individual that has not selected and prepared his materials properly. Much of the preparation required can be accomplished in advance of tying the fly. Given advance cleaning and proper storage, materials can be ready to use at a moments notice. When not cleaned and/or when improperly stored,

materials may be misshapen, or worse yet, devoured by insects. Specific details of preparation and storage will be discussed at length during the symposium, but below is a very general list of some things to consider.

Material storage should only begin after proper cleaning. Most often simply washing the material in warm, soapy water (dish washing liquid is generally adequate,) thoroughly rinsed, then either air dried or blow dried does the job nicely. Some feel that the addition of Woolite® adds luster that may have been lost due to drying over years of storage. Also it has been suggested that hair conditioners applied during the final rinse may improve the material was well, particularly hair.

Once the material is absolutely dry it can be stored. Flat materials, (i.e., turkey tails, small body feathers, etc.) can be stored in side opening zip-type bags. Top loading bags generally mean a mangled feather for turkey, goose, etc. Also side open bags are easier to get one's hand in and out of. They are a bit more difficult to find, but well worth the search. I prefer to stack feathers that have a bit of a natural curve, such as wood duck, pintail, mallard, etc., and place them in that fashion into a zip-type bag. The curve is retained, but storage space is reduced to a minimum. You may wish to pair the feathers in advance, then stack them. I prefer to place these zip-locks into a sealable Tupperware® type container to which I will often add a small amount of Paradichlorobenzene (Enoz Moth Ice® Nuggets is the brand I - use.) This will deter or kill any unwanted insects, but will not fumigate the tying area with a very nasty cancer causing agent. It also makes for a very compact storage space.

Some materials are not happy in flat bags. An example is the 3-D feather found on the crest of a Golden Pheasant. Once prepared (an interesting process in itself) the feather is best stored with numerous individual feathers stacked into themselves progressively smaller to larger. Then the whole stack can be easily placed into a plastic box. The box can then be placed into a Tupperware® type container. Fair warning, though: styrene plastics will melt when in contact with Paradichlorobenzene, or at the very least will cloud. Center tails of Amherst and Golden Pheasants present another storage problem involving a 3-D feathers. Though the beauty of the feather is lost, cutting it into more storable size pieces makes sense. Also consider slicing the feather shaft in half so that the feather halves can be stored flat.

Even though every care has been taken to properly clean and store materials, invariably some item called for in a fly will be bent, twisted, or flattened out of normal alignment. This is the time to bring out the electric tea pot. 1 would discourage the use of devices I have seen that supposedly "perk" ones feathers up at vise side. The purchase of an electric tea kettle is worth every penny, and probably less than the aforementioned devise. Electric tea kettles heat up very quickly and give an adequate amount of steam to do the job. Caution should be taken to not burn oneself or the material since the steam is amazingly hot! Enough said.

I use steam to reshape back to a normal position most anything: macaw, turkey, strung hackle, floss (silk or rayon,) etc. But perhaps the most amazing use is one I learned about from a friend when I complained about blowing up a wing and having to rebuild it numerous times. His response was, "Why didn't you steam it?" It never occurred to me! Since then I have salvaged many wings that were crumpled seemingly beyond repair by re-steaming them. Also consider steaming a wing just prior to initial mounting. The steam seems to soften the barbs allowing them to collapse a bit more readily.

Even with the best material preparation, without a good understanding of how a material naturally responds the fly tier is at a major disadvantage. I would recommend getting at least 20x magnifying lens and then take the time to look closely at your materials. Ever wonder why a hackle rolls up onto it's side when wrapped? Ever wonder why certain dubbing materials are easier to use than others? Ever wonder why a herl wraps nicely one time and the next it looks like someone stepped on it? Ever wonder why some feathers in a tail or body veiling stack onto one another easier than others? Close observation of the natural material will answer each of those questions. Having a good working knowledge of the anatomy of the materials we use will only improve our flies.

Preparation also involves what I define as "substitutes" and "alternates." My definition of a "substitute" is a material that has been selected which looks like or is made to look like a feather normally used, such as substituting dyed-yellow CDC for toucan. My definition of an "alternate" is a material that has been selected to replace another that may be slightly or perhaps greatly different from the normal material used, such as Kenya Crested Guinea in place of Teal. There is opportunity for a great deal of creativity here. Hand dipping feathers into various colors of dyes to get multiple tones of color, bleaching barbules off barbs, bending materials under pressure or heat are all ways to achieve either a match to a specific

material or creating a different look. Peeling alternate barbs, inserting barbs into wing slips, mixing colors of floss all are ways of making some changes that may be subtle to striking. They may subtly substitute a part of the fly or they may alter it a great deal.

The last item of preparation I make before tying a Salmon fly is what I will call the "advance plan." Knowing what you are going to do long before you get there is crucial to the final look of the fly. If you can mentally picture the whole tying process of a fly in advance, wonderful. I find it beneficial to make sketches of the fly before ever putting thread to hook. A simple way of doing this is to photocopy the hook intended for use and make pencil sketches on the photocopy. If you are more artistically inclined you may wish to use tissue paper overlays with colored pencil as Steve Fernandez does. I prefer to make the sketch as close in size to the actual fly as possible so that I can place my sketch immediately behind the fly during the tying process for direct comparison. Rarely will the appearance of the drawing and the fly end up the same, but the proportions and materials placement it gives me are indispensable. Also it is easier to erase pencil scratches than it is to unwrap numerous warps of thread.

WORKING WITH FLOSS

Steve Schwietzer

A floss silk body should be quite smooth, free from all bumps or irregularities, and should taper gradually from butt to head."

T.E. Pryce-Tannatt page 152, "How to Dress Salmon Flies"

I've developed a habit instilled in me by my salmon fly tying mentors. When evaluating the salmon fly dressings of others, I look at the floss work first. It is a key characteristic that determines and shows the skills of the cream of the crop. While each intricate step of creating a salmon fly requires undaunting attention to detail, applying silk floss correctly is oftentimes overlooked and under-taught. Even in T.E. Pryce-Tannatt's classic book, "How to Dress Salmon Flies", he only dedicates two paragraphs to the subject.

I have been fortunate enough to have been mentored and scrutinized by some fantastic tyers over the years. They each pursue salmon fly perfection like no other. This article is largely a re-capsulation of what they have shared with me. Their mentoring was not in the form of teaching a technique but moreso in what to look for... what is right and what is wrong. I reckoned they shared with me the concepts of what flat floss work should look like; figuring that I would manage some how to apply the floss in my own manner. Well, I did, and this article explains my technique further: the bodkin needle technique. But let's first discuss the material at hand: silk.

Floss Fundamentals

There are many flosses on the market. Nylon, Dacron, Polyester, Silk, one-strand, two-strand, four-strand, twisted two-strand, etc. For purposes of this article we will focus on tying with classic silkworm silk...the natural stuff.

Two stand out as the preferred choices in salmon fly tying. Pearsall's tying silk, a twisted 2-pair silk floss is great for smaller applications and predominantly wet fly tying. The color and consistency of the dyes are impeccable and don't vary from batch to batch. The range of colors to choose is diverse and covers most all eccentric tastes in classic salmon fly tying. the silk comes in smaller 10-meter spools.

But, my preferred silk choice is manufactured in the Orient (company not known ... better yet, I'm not able to read the writing on the box!). The silk comes on approximately 4-inch cardboard tubes and is somewhat flattened already. The colors are extremely vibrant and consistent, the most vibrant I've ever seen in any dyed material. In fact, you will have a hard time in matching other dyed materials like seal's fur dubbing and swan shoulder to the exquisite colors available to you. The drawback: at nearly $8 US per tube, the cost of obtaining the basic colors (12 or so) can run up the tab in a hurry. The company offers a color selection chart available for about $10 that includes actual samples from all 77 of the available colors. If you are at all serious about the quality and color of the silk floss you use in salmon flies, it is best to get yourself a copy of the color card. If you need help in obtaining the color card or buying silk colors, email me, I'll help you in locating what you need.

Handling Silk Floss

True silk floss will pick up and show the slightest of skin oils and dirt. Both of which mar the gorgeous sheen and rich colors that natural silk floss embodies. The cure: thoroughly wash your hands with an alcohol-based cleanser like the anti-bacterial soaps now on the market. Rinse your hands thoroughly and pat dry with a clean towel. Avoid picking up too much towel lint.

If your hands are rough and dry, a piece of 300-400 grit emery paper can be used to "sand" away the dry parts of your finger tips. This will help alleviate the possibility of having a small dry patch of skin catch the silk floss; if you use your bare hands. Don't ever use hand cream to sooth your dry hands if you are about to tie with silk!

Finally, as a precautionary measure, I always use a silk glove on the hand that touches the silk as I wrap. Silk on silk is the best route for protecting the fragile nature of natural silk floss. Don't use hackle pliers either. If they are metal-on-metal clasps, they will most certainly shear some of the fibers of the silk and cause little stray silk fibers to form. These are those telltale microstrands that stick out like a sore thumb on silk bodies that aren't carefully applied. Also, don't even use rubber-padded hackle pliers. They don't allow you to flatten the silk out like you could if you were just using your hands. Bottom line: just use your hands!

The Telltale Base

Under all that pretty floss you lay on a hook are wraps of thread and maybe even some foundation material used to create a progressive taper. If these wraps aren't flat they'll most definitely show up through the thin wrap of fine silk. The first step of ensuring flat under-wrappings is to untwist the roped bias that all thread exhibits. Spinning your bobbin counter-clockwise will flatten the thread and allow greater control in application.

The rule of thumb for flat floss is to cover the entire silk-bound area with flat thread wraps first. Pay strict attention to wrapping the thread. Ensure each wrap touches the previous but does not overlap it. Assuming you started at the oval tinsel wraps at the tag, move forward to the eye of the hook covering the silk-destined section of the shank with the thread base. You may want to go over the area several times to build up a slight taper as called for in some classic salmon patterns. Finally, even after you've taken precise caution in ensuring flat thread wraps, there always seems to be a few minor lumps to work out. If you're really good, it will take a magnifying lens to detect these, but they are there and silk will magnify those minor nuances later on. Using a very smooth bodkin needle, free of glue fragments and burrs, rub it gently back and forth over the thread base to smooth it out one last time. This step is called burnishing. Take as long as necessary on this whole step; for it is sure that your time and efforts will be rewarded in flawless floss application later.

Starting the Silk Floss on the Hook Shank

Because hiding your starting point is essential to leaving a flat trace of properly laid silk, let's talk about where to start silk wraps. Let's use the tag wrap for conversation starters. The tag wrap is one of the most common elements of all salmon flies. The most common error is to start your floss right after the tinsel wraps and work up from there. Doing this forces you to cover up the tied in tag of floss on the back side of the fly. Most certainly a bump will result. Instead, tie the silk in just forward of the ending point of the silk and wrap back to the tag, then forward again. Tie off where you started your floss. The bump at the tie off point is usually covered by another material, thus it isn't essential to worry about this.

Now I've presented some fundamental chores necessary to laying flat floss, let's get on with the key point to this article!

Applying Silk Using A Bodkin

Even if you have laid the perfect foundation, you can still mess up the floss. I've developed a method that aids in flattening the floss prior to applying it to the hook shank: The bodkin needle method.

Here's how it works.

The first step to success is to tie in the floss at the starting point on the hook shank in a relatively flattened state to begin with. The best way to achieve this is to tie it in at a 45 degree angle in the direction you wish to wrap it. To achieve a relatively flat wrap as the tie in point, use the thread-wrap

trap method to secure the beginning tag of the floss.. The thread-wrap trap method is nothing more than moving the material to be tied in under an existing wrap of thread instead of adding another wrap of thread to capture the material on the hook.

Once the silk is tied on securely and flat, the job of applying consecutively thin flat wraps over the hook shank is aided by using a bodkin. On the backside turn of each wrap, utilize a clean and de-burred bodkin needle to help flatten out the floss. Accomplish this by sliding the bodkin needle up and down the backside wrap of floss to flatten it AND at the same time bringing the wrap under the hook shank and over the top, completing one revolution. Repeat this step for each wrap until you've reached the backward end of the flossed area and do the same moving forward to the tie in point. Basically each wrap has a pre-flattened floss segment prior to wrap-in via the aid of a bodkin needle. 1 use the bodkin needle to help lay the flattened silk for each wrap on the hook shank. Some folks can wrap silk without the aid of any tools but I find it easier to use this method.

The Flat Scoop On Flat Silk Bodies

As you can see, I've devoted more time in this article discussing the importance of the underbody and shank preparation than in discussing the actual application of silk floss. It's because the underbody is the most critical element in assuring flattering flat floss. Take the time in preparing the base and you will be rewarded with flatter floss bodies.

MONOFILAMENT AS A GUT SUBSTITUTE

Marvin Nolte

The preparation is a bit involved but the finished product is quite good. The first step is disguising the monofilament. Put a coil of clear monofilament (0.009 to 0.012 inches works well) into a container that you do not mind ruining. Squirt a small puddle of super glue into the container, taking care not to get any on the monofilament, then seal the container. Twenty-four hours later the monofilament will be etched.

Wipe any white residue from the etched mono then polish it. I use a 50:50 mix of carnauba and beeswax. I am sure that paraffin, straight beeswax, neutral shoe polish, anything but tying wax will work.

Now the monofilament must be twisted. Actually twisting it is no problem. Maintaining the twist is. Take three strands of equal length, clamp both ends, twist as tightly as you dare. Then suspend the twisted monofilament and clamps between two supports. The key to setting the twist is heat. I tried a hair dryer which took to long. An alcohol lamp run quickly under the monofilament effectively set the twist.

As a side note. Another method that was in the November 1981 Fly Tyer Magazine for heating the monofilament was discussed by Poul Jorgensen. Poul recommended using boiling water to set the twist. Basically, follow Marvin's method up to heating with a lamp. Pour some water into two sauce pans. To one pan add a few ice cubes and the other bring to a boil. Dip the twisted monofilament into the boiling water for about ten seconds then quickly take it out of the boiling water and dip it into the ice water. According to Poul, it should stay twisted.

TYING THE NUMBER 3 SPIRIT FLY

Gary Grant

I recently became the owner of Blacker's, "The Art of Fly Making". Reading the book and gazing at the color plates I became somewhat impressed with the Spirit flies. And so 1 thought I would dress the second Spirit fly listed in the book. I read through the dressing listed and quickly discovered that it would be a much more difficult task than first anticipated. The difficulty was more so in trying to decipher the pattern than with actually tying the fly.

Blacker listed 15 salmon flies in his book. Two were actually named "Spirit fly," which are the first and third patterns listed. If you have ever read Blacker's "The Art of Fly Making," you'll quickly notice that Blacker was not very good at describing how to dress flies. Kevin McKenna, in the introduction of the Flyfisher's Classic Library edition, described it as either deliberate obfuscation, or lack of literary skill. In either case, it results in the flies described by Blacker being extremely difficult to dress.

Maybe much has to do with the patterns listed, and the corresponding artist renditions. It seems Blacker listed the dressings as one would list them from memory without first organizing their thoughts. Maybe, he had other things on his mind, like landing a 20 pounder. Or, perhaps, he listed them as one would organize the materials before one started to dress the fly. Or then again, McKenna was right in that it was deliberate obfuscation. Perhaps, to ensure no one would copy his patterns?

To illustrate the problem here is the No 3 salmon fly pattern as written in Blacker's own words: "The wings are made of the following mixtures of feathers, each side of the wings to be alike: brown mallard, bustard, and wood duck; a topping, scarlet macaw, teal, golden pheasant neck feather, a strip of yellow macaw, and feelers of blue and yellow tail; a head of black ostrich; the tail to be a topping, mixed with green and red parrot tail; body is composed of joints, first a tip of silver, a tag of morone floss, a tag of black, a joint of brown, green, and brown-red hackle, puce and red, green and yellow, blue and orange, with a tip of gold tinsel at each joint, a very small red hackle, and two red toucan feathers round the shoulder, and blue kingfisher's feather on each side of the wings.

After reading through the pattern, I quickly became confused. What color is the floss and what color are the hackles? And, did I misread something, or is the tag two colors morone and black? I referred to the plate showing the No.3 "Spirit Fly" actually referred to as "Another of the Spirit Flies that kill so well in the rivers of .Ireland and Scotland," and it was not like what was described. The tail veiling was barred woodduck, not the mixed green and red parrot listed. In an effort to try and find a better description to reference for the dressing, I searched through PryceTannett, Kelson, and Hale, and only found one reference to Spirit flies. That reference was in Hale, however, he listed two Spirit flies. One was a Red Spirit fly and the other was just a Spirit fly. Neither of these seemed to be close to the pattern listed by Blacker.

I searched through Mikael Frodin's, Classic Salmon Flies, History and Patterns and found even more confusion. Frodin listed three Spirit flies, appropriately named No. 1, No.2, and No.3. After reading through the three patterns listed by Frodin, it seems he listed the second Blacker's pattern as a "Spirit Fly".

Blacker made no reference to the second salmon fly as a "Spirit Fly". He provided no name for the fly. Actually he described the pattern and simply referenced the fly to one that "is about as fine a specimen of a salmon fly as ever was thrown into the water, and will kill salmon and grilse". If that is not a fisherman's description, I do not know what is. He simply referred to the fly like any fisherman would a more modem day pattern. Perhaps, as a fisherman would explain any other favorite "emerger" pattern.

Frodin did, however, make some sense of what he calls the No.3 Spirit Fly, and after reading through Frodin's interpretation of the third Blacker's pattern it seems to make more sense now looking back at Blacker's pattern. Here is the pattern for Blacker's "second" Spirit Fly as interpreted by Frodin. Listed as the No3. Spirit Fly by Frodin.

Tag: Silver tinsel and morone silk

Tail: A topping mixed with green and red parrot tail

Butt: Black Berlin wool or ostrich herl

Body: Divided in four equal parts of silk, first puce, red, green and yellow, finally blue and orange dyed silk. Between sections a few turns of gold tinsel are tied in, plus a hackle. The colors of the hackle should be first brown, followed by green and finally puce.

Throat: A very small red cock's hackle, and two red toucan feathers

Wings: Golden pheasant tippets, bustard, wood duck, teal, scarlet macaw, yellow macaw, brown mallard and a topping

Sides: Blue kingfisher

Horns: Blue and yellow tail feathers (macaw)

Head: Black ostrich herl

Now, on to dressing "Another Spirit Fly".

The first step I like to do when dressing a salmon fly is lay out all the materials. For this pattern I would use the followings substitutes:

Tail: for the red and green parrot, use red and green goose shoulder

Wing: for the bustard use a finely mottled natural turkey tail, for the yellow and red macaw use white turkey tail dyed yellow and red.

Throat: just use a two red cock hackles one small and the other sized to be appropriate for the hook gape.

The only question I had relating to materials was what color is "Puce?" A quick look through a dictionary indicated that it is a color of a "purplish brown." To simply things a dark purple is a very nice color and is the one I selected for the fly. You may wish to search for such a color, or use a dark brown. I like dark purple in some of the steelhead patterns I dress, so purple seemed appropriate for this fly.

After collecting all the materials it is best to start with the wing. I fashion the wing first, then select the appropriate hook for the task. I find that the completed fly looks "balanced" when you fashion the wing and then select the hook, rather than the other way around. Blacker took this to the extreme though in his book. He provided some instructions and a plate or two on how to easily dress a plain salmon fly. I would not recommend it. Basically, you start at the head and work back words. Specially, mount the wing the reverse way and work your way back to the tail. I do not think one could actually dress a fly in this manner. But, it would be interesting to try. Perhaps, on a snowy night in July I will try this.

For the wing on this fly you can simply cut a strip of the three different colors of turkey tail and golden pheasant and marry the four components and be done with it. But, the finished fly will look somewhat plan, particularly when you consider the complexity of the body. So to provide some "artist balance," I would recommend a somewhat more intricate wing.

The wing pattern I like is tedious, but nice when complete. I like a single barb of each color of turkey that repeats six times. I started the wing with a single barb of red, then yellow, then the mottled turkey. This pattern is repeated six times resulting in a wing that is 18 total barbs. Next marry 6 barbs of golden pheasant to the top of the alternating red, yellow and mottled turkey and you have a very nice looking wing that is 24 barbs high. I know I did not go into much detail in marrying the single fibers. I will refer you to an earlier article, in the April 1998 issue of the Flyer by Wayne Luallen on the subject. Wayne, has explained the process as only Wayne can, very thoroughly and with precision of an open heart surgeon!

I will say that since you will be marrying single barbs, it is best to cut at least 8 barbs (referred to here as a strip) from the feather of each color. Then marry the yellow strip to the red strip and remove all but one yellow barb. Then marry the mottled turkey strip to the yellow barb and remove all but one mottled barb. Now remove all but one red barb from the bottom of the wing and you now have three barbs to work with rather than trying to marry single barbs together, which is almost impossible.

Remember to select barbs of equal shape, texture and taper. Both the left and right strips should have the same taper at the end of the wing. Cut the strips from approximately the same location on each feather. If you cut some strips from the top of the feather and other strips near the bottom you will have a wing the will be difficult to mount and the end will look very ragged. The most important point, that is usually over looked, is where you select the strip on the feather. Select the strip from approximately the same location of each feather for each strip. And you will have a greater chance of dressing a fine fly and one you will be proud of.

Now to the hook.

Typically the golden pheasant will be the limiting factor for hook size on this fly. Turkey tail barbs are generally very long. Golden pheasant tails can be long compared to peacock wing barbs. But, rarely will they be a long as turkey tail. Blacker recommended a size 6 hook for salmon and a size 10 for grilse for this fly. Since most of us like the larger flies. I would select a size 6 hook. Now, the question is what make of hook?

In Blacker's time, the Phillips of Dublin Limerick was most likely the hook selected. These hooks were highly prized at the time Blacker was dressing flies and fishing the Spey or Tweed. A superb reference for these hooks can be found in "The Book of the Salmon" by Ephemera. Ephemera was the pen name of Edward Fitzgibbon a close friend of Blacker. So close of a friend, that when Blacker passed away Fitzgibbon was the only person at Blacker's side other than the doctor. Interesting though, is the absence of the two Blacker Spirit fly patterns in Fitzgibbon' book. The Not and NO. There is a reference to the Ondine. This is the only Spirit fly with a proper name. The three Spirit flies can be identified by the multiple hackled body veilings. If you look closely at the "No.2 Spirit" fly listed in Frodin, you will see that there is no multiple hackled body veilings. Why these three flies are listed in two different references and not all inclusive in Blacker's, is just one of those mysteries that makes history so interesting.

Where were we? Oh yes the hook. If you have a copy of Fitzgibbon's book, you will find one of the best plates of the Phillips of Dublin Limerick hooks. Fitzgibbon describes these hooks as "The best hooks for Salmon-Flies. These hooks that Fitzgibbon's used for salmon fishing were manufactured by Mr. John Phillips, 18. Ellis's Quay, Dublin. Fitzgibbon's considered them the best for all properties-shape, temper, strength. The interesting aspect of the plate is that it was made by the Adlards who were famed for their attention to accuracy and detail. Not like the colored plates where the artist coloring varied day-to-day and book-to-book.

If you do not have one of these hooks, there are several hook makers among the membership that would be glad to provide you one of their fine reproductions (at a fair cost). If you do not wish to use a hand made No 6 Phillips of Dublin Limerick, a size 1/0 Partridge Bartleet is a good choice It is closer to a No. 5 than a No. 6. But, it will be more than adequate for what we are doing.

Now that we have selected the hook. It is actually time to start dressing the fly. When dressing a blind eye hook, you will want to start by attaching the gut eye. Pryce-Tannett has some superb instructions on attaching the gut eye. But, since we will not be fishing the fly it will not be necessary to have the gut eye run the length of the hook shank, particularly if you are using genuine silk gut. But, if you are using mono as described earlier by Marvin, you can dress the fly as was traditionally done. This would give your fly a fuller body and it would be more in the style and look of a fishing fly, which is what these creations are supposed to be!

If you are using silk and attach a short gut eye, taper the ends before you tie in the gut loop or your will have an unsightly budge right in the middle of the last body segment. Now to prevent this you may want to create a tapered underbody.

Perhaps, you are perplexed with why I am describing problems that are many steps on "down-the-road." But, these are important considerations when dressing a fly. You need to think many steps ahead. If you are using a short gut eye, make sure the unsightly ends will be where the throat will cover up the transition. Or use the underbody technique of Michael Radencich to smooth out the transition. Planning your fly will help mitigate problems before they occur.

After you attach the eye, the next step is the tip and tag. Since this fly will have two colors of silk in the tag, it will require a slightly different approach than a single color floss tag. I think the double floss tag is simpler than first thought. I would recommend that when you tie in the tip you leave long ends rather than short tag ends. After you secure the tip wind the thread to a point just above the point of the hook keeping the tag ends under the hook shank.

Now tie in the maroon floss on the bottom of the hook shank directly above the point of the hook with two turns of thread Wrap the floss to the tip and back to the tie in point. Remove one thread wrap, and secure with two turns of flattened thread. Now, tie in the black floss slightly in front of the maroon floss tie off point and wrap the black floss half way down the tag and transition it back to the tie in point and tie it off with two turns of flattened thread. You should now have a tapered tag with two colors of floss. All the floss tie in and off points will be covered by the butt. Make sure when you wrap the floss it is very flat and smooth. You will want to burnish the tag. But, be very careful not to cause the black floss to migrate down the tag. It is best not to burnish the floss with a left to right motion.

Now is time for the tail.

At this point you have to ask yourself: How do I want to wing to set on the fly? If you want a low sleek wing, it will require a different tail than that with a high "humped" wing. I like a fly with a sleek wing

profile. That is, one that rides low and parallel to the hook shank. Because I want the wing to sit low on the fly, the tail will need to be appropriate for the wing profile.

The tail is very important to the "balance" and appearance of the finished fly. Do not underestimate the importance of this step. Use your best golden pheasant crest feathers. For as much time that you are going to take in dressing the multi-jointed body, do not pick a poor feather.

When selecting a crest feather for tailing, I like to select a feather that could be used as a topping for a small fly. I know some dressers like to use a small crest feather because it is easier to tie in. This is because the tie in point is where the feather is the softest and when flattened simplifies the process and looks good. I, however, like a fuller looking tail. By using a larger feather you will have a fuller looking tail that looks more like a mirror image of the topping. A caution when working with the larger feathers, is that the stem is brittle. Be careful when you flatten the stem. Do not overly "work" the stem and it will be fine, and tie in just as easily as a smaller feather.

Before you tie in the tail take some of the curve out of the feather and open up the barbs by nicking the bottom of the feather with your finger nail. This flattens the tail and allows it to leave the tie in point parallel to the hook shank for about a quarter inch. This helps obtain the sleek wing profile.

To be continued in the next issue.

THE GORDON
Dressed by Flemming Dam Nielsen

THE SEARCH FOR MATERIALS

James F. Goggans

I was asked by Wayne Luallen to write an article for the Salmon Flyer. As a novice, I am afraid this will probably be old hat to many of the readers of this publication. But, it will at least chronicle the struggle I have had in getting started within the last couple of years.

When first starting, I purchased many of the basics from catalog sources such as Marriott's, Hunter's, Blue Ribbon Anglers, Angler's Workshop, English Angling Trappings, Orvis, Cabelas and others. This got me some silk, tinsels, hooks, dubbings, thread, cement, hackles and a some of the feathers I felt I needed. But, it quickly brought up this quandary; would substitute feathers suffice or were original feathers necessary? After looking at photographs in modern reference books on the subject and looking at the work of modern pros at work, I concluded that there is no substituting for a number of things. And no reason to substitute for a number of others. And in one case, a substitute seems more appropriate than the original. I will discuss a few of these.

I began using Angora as a substitute for seal. It is easy to work with and comes in myriad colors. However, it just doesn't quite have the same texture and sheen as seal. At the moment, seal seems quite available in the range of colors needed for classic flies and is not particularly expensive. I purchased some from Gayland Hachey and English Angling Trappings (who is not a regular supplier of this item but obtained that which he sent from an estate). I believe John Shewey is also now selling dyed seal on a regular basis as well. I would recommend acquiring and using seal where called for. I would also recommend using it for pig's wool. My mother recently sent some pig's wool she got for me from my hometown university's Swine Research Unit. I'm not sure how anyone ever made that work. But if you want to try it, let me know....

From commercial catalogs I obtained use feathers died in all the needed colors. These work fine for flies with wings of less than two inches. When I began, I tied on the 1/0 returned eye hooks and the goose was adequate. But I discovered after getting some swan feathers (they were in I believe still are available from anglers workshop) that the goose seems coarser and is not quite is easy to tied down a swan. But, the swan feathers I have been able to obtain rarely have a fiber length greater than 2 1/2 inches. So you still must use it for fairly small flies. It was Paul Ptalis who said to me that I should be looking for a dyed white turkey tails. Getting those was a revelation. I now had wing fibers easily up to four inches. That will put a wing on a pretty big hook! I should say that as I continued progress in my time I discovered a couple of things about larger flies.

The first is they show better in a frame. The second is they are somewhat easier to tie! But back to the matter of dyed feathers for wings; swan is most commonly called for in the classic patterns, yet turkey has the length needed for larger flies. I found sources for dyed turkey from Gayland Hachey, John Shewey, Paul Phillipone (Donegal, which is online now), and I have heard Angler's Workshop has a supply of very nice feathers which they imported from across the Atlantic. But turkey has a couple of problems. It is also fairly coarse compared to swan and in this country, where the birds are raised for food rather than feathers, the vast majority of feathers are stressmarked, broken and so on. On many of the feathers I have purchased I am lucky to get an inch or two of useful fibers from a feather. But wait, there is one more solution. The white feathers from the Great (florican) Bustard are perfect. Their texture is as good or better than swan and the fiber length can easily be 4 1/2". I won't even mention how I came by those ... But this brings up an interesting reversal. This seems to be a case where I think a substitute (turkey) is more practical and useful than the most commonly called for item (swan). There is one other substitute that is highly favored by at least some tyers and that is the tail supports from blue India peacocks. Judy Lehmberg introduced me to that idea. I wish I could say I really like that option because in my neighborhood I have a marauding band of about 100 peacocks that are the result of one of my neighbors deciding (in the 50's) that a pair of peacocks would be a nice addition to his orchards. His widow now says "if they are on your property, do what you want with them". So another of my neighbors enjoys omelettes in the Spring and roasted peacock for Thanksgiving. I just pick up the feathers (so far). But the tail supports lack a number of attributes that make for good dyed substitutes for swan. First they are dark grey, so you cannot really use them for light colors. Second, they are fairly coarse fibers. Third, the longest fibers I have found are about 2 3/4". The dark grey problem can be avoided by using white peacock. I purchased a set of these from Chuck Moxley. I believe he is still selling them.

This brings me to Cotinga or "Blue Chatterer". Kingfishers have some very pretty blue feathers that look very much like some of the Cotinga varieties. And they are oh so much less expensive. You can't really use Kingfisher as a sub for, say, C. maynana, but then I don't think I've ever seen a particular variety of Cotinga specified in a classic work with pattern descriptions. What I do is use Kingfisher for most flat tail veilings and Cotinga for cheeks. The Kingfisher is widely available. Cotingas are not so widely available. I was able to purchase a perfect old museum mount C. cayana, which did me no good from a tying standpoint, because I am unwilling to take feathers from it. I have it on display in a glass bell jar now. Fortunately, I was able to purchase a damaged and partially dismembered museum mount from another tyer that was reducing his collection that I now use. I can only say that this is the only way I know to get these feathers. I currently know the whereabouts of one other whole bird.

With Toucan and Red Ruffed Fruit Crow, I can't see a decent substitute for presentation flies. Nothing else, either natural or manipulated, has the colors and texture of these two feathers. I have seen tyers go to extremes to try and make a replica of the Crow and frankly, I just don't think they look good. For me, I will either use a completely different feather, such as Red Bishop, for practice or I will use the Crow for presentation. The Bishop doesn't look a bit like Crow, but it is very pretty.

There are a number of other red feathers from various Loris, parrots, etc. that are also beautiful feathers. These can be acquired from Kate Davidson at Siskiyou Aviary and other sources. At the moment, the real item, Pyroderus scutatus scutatus, can be purchased from Paul Smookler. He has them listed on his web site. Loose feathers are $500.00 per 100. Crow is another feather that I was able to obtain from an estate and from an experienced tyer that had enough that he could spare some. I also fell nto the trap of purchasing a perfect museum mount of a whole bird. It's in the bell jar with the Cotinga.

Toucan would seem to be simpler to get a substitute for as it is just a yellow feather. Yeah, it's just yellow, but nothing else is quite shaped like a Toucan feather. I have tried using various small yellow feathers from Loris and parrots and even small Golden pheasant crest feathers. I must say, just use

Toucan. The problem with that is finding it. I believe Kate Davidson has a source for some molted feathers. I was able to find some from more experienced tyers that could spare a few, some from estates, and a whole breast from a tyer that was reducing his inventory. At least when you find them they aren't nearly as expensive as Crow. Around a buck or two a feather should get you some at the moment. Matt Crompton may have some to sell now.

I don't see much need to discuss substitutes for speckled bustard. The first reason is Kori Bustard feathers seem to be readily available as molts from a number of sources. Vern Jeremica recently sent some to me as did Phil Castleman. I have gotten them from others as well on an irregular basis, but both Vern and Phil have them pretty routinely, I gather. The second reason is my standard reason for the other feathers--nothing else looks like speckled bustard. Even one of my dedicated substitute buddies uses Kori. It has an added advantage if you can arrange your wing with the Kori on top of making the tie-down much easier.

I hope this has been helpful. If you have an interest in discussing any of this, correcting my errors, or getting information on contacting any sources by all means email me. If you don't like my opinion, YOU get to write the next article for this August publication! I promise I'll read it. Or to paraphrase Monty Python's disclaimer on one of their albums; Please direct all complaints about this article to British Airways, Greenwich.

OBSCURE PATTERNS

Marvin Nolte

More properly, some patterns from obscure references. While researching patterns for the Grainger Collection I encountered some salmon flies not found in the more familiar references. As if you didn't have enough patterns from which to choose, here are some you may not have seen.

From The Fly Fisher's Guide by George C. Bainbridge, 1816. These were written long before there were any conventions for salmon fly patterns. I give then in their original form. Good Luck!

No. 1 is recommended as a spring fly, and is to be composed of the following materials: Wings, of the dark mottled brown or blackish feather of a turkey; body, of orange camlet mixed with a little mohair; and a dusky red, or bright brown cock's hackle, plucked from the back where the fibres are longest, for legs.

No. 2 is of smaller size, and may occasionally be dressed upon very strong single gut. Any feather of a copper or dirty yellow colour, which is not too course in the fibres, will answer for the wings; such may be found on the domestic hen, turkey, or the landrail: the body of lemon coloured mohair mixed with a small portion of light brown fur or camlet; and a pale dusky ginger.

No. 3 Although the colours of this fly are of a sombre cast, it is nevertheless frequently used in summer with success. The wing area to be procured from the cormorant, or the mottled feather of the mallard, if very dark; body of dark sable ribbed with gold wire, over which is a dusky red hackle should be thickly wound; for the tail, the mottled feathers of the drake; and before fastening off, a little floss (sic) silk should be unraveled, and fastened at the extremity of the work.

No. 4 Differs materially from those preceding, and is given in order to describe the method of dressing gaudy flies; which, however fanciful or varied in shade or material, will frequently raise fish when all limitations or nature have proven unsuccessful; in deed so fastidious and whimsical are the salmon at times, that the more brilliant the extravagant the fly, the more certain is the angler if diversion. The fly thus given as a specimen is formed as follows: the wings the extreme end of the feather of a guinea fowl not stripped, but having the feather left ion both sides the middle stem; a blood red hackle should be fastened on with the wings, and so arranged as to extent beyond them; the dyed feathers used by officers in the army answer very well for the purpose, if those from the macaw can not be procured. The body best made of harl (sic) of an ostrich dyed to correspond with the red feather introduced; with a bright yellow hackle over it. The beautiful green feather which forms the eye of the peacok's tail should be fastened at the head, and left hanging downwards so as to cover the body nearly half and inch, and a few strips of the same part of the feather may be fastened at the tail.

From the Angler's Companion to the Rivers and Lochs of Scotland, by Thomas Todd Stoddart, 1853 (in the same format as the book):

Wings: Taken from the feather of a raven
Body: Black mohair, black hackle
Tail: Golden pheasant crest feather
No. 20. (No. 19 is the Black Dragon, 1 through 18 are trout flies)
Wings: Mottled black and white tail feather from a turkey.
Body: Dark-blue mohair, touched off with twitch of orange, ditto, two turns of lightblue floss and ostrich herl. Black hackle, gold tinsel
Shoulders: Claret-coloured hackle above twitch of mohair of the same colour
Tail: Golden pheasant crest, ostrich herl

No. 21

Wings: Golden pheasant tail and neck feathers, bustard, green parrot, and guineafowl, mixed together with a little red and blue; with large gold topping over all, and small blue kingfisher on each side. Macaw feelers.
Body: One-third deep yellow, next to tag, and remainder black pig's wool. Black hackle, flat white lace (?-mn).
Shoulders: Blue feather from Indian Kingfisher or jay.
Tag/Tail: Black ostrich herl, with yellow silk, tipped with silver. Small gold crest feather.
Head: Black ostrich herl.

No. 22

Wings: Same mixture as No. 21 with two jungle cock feathers in the middle of wing, of sufficient length to expose the white spots.
Body: Dark claret pig's wool, with hackle of the same colour, and gold lace.
Shoulders: Blue jay.
Tag/Tail: Black ostrich herl, and light blue silk tipped with silver. Small gold crest feather.
Head: Black ostrich herl.

No. 23

Wings: White wing: pure white feather taken from swan or white turkey: six or seven slips are sufficient for each wing.
Body: Dark-blue silk, purple hackle and silver thread.
Shoulders: A dyed blue jay hackle (sic)
Tail tuft: Light yellow
Head: Black ostrich herl.

No. 24

Wings: Two gold pheasant neck feathers, half the length of wing when tied on with two jungle-cock feathers in the centre, and two or three large gold crests over top. Macaw feelers. Kingfisher feathers on each side.
Body: Black pig's wool, black hackle and white lace.
Shoulders: Blue jay.
Tag/Tail: Black ostrich herl, and deep yellow floss silk, tipped with silver. Gold crest. Head: Black ostrich herl.

No. 25

Wings: Same mixture as No. 23.
Body: Dark-yellow pig's wool, hackle same colour, silver thread.
Shoulders: Purple-dyed hackle
Tail: Small gold crest feather.

Spey fly, No. 26

Wings: Brown mottled feather taken from the back of a mallard.
Body: Black and brown mohair, or pig's wool mixed; hackle taken from pendant breast feathers of male

heron, broad gold or silver lace, lapped on widely.
Tail Tuft: Yellow or orange.

Spey fly, No. 26

Wings: A pair of crest feathers taken from a golden pheasant.
Body: Black mohair; black hackle, silver tinsel.
Tail Tuft: Yellow

Nith fly

Wings: Red turkey with yellow or white tip; under wings of grey turkey, teal, or peahen.
Body: Light brown wool; peacock herl; red hackle with dark root and edge; tarnished gold tinsel.
Shoulders: Dark brown or black wool.
Tail Tuft: Yellow

Tay fly

Wings: Mottled turkey feather, either brown or white.
Body: Dark mohair, heron hackle, gold tinsel.
Shoulders: A twitch of yellow or orange mohair
Tail Tuft: Yellow or red.

Dee fly

Wings: Speckled black and white turkey feather; for small sizes of hook employ teal feather.
Body: Blue mohair, dark brown hackle, silver tinsel.

Ness and Beauley

Wings: Turkey, peacock, gledd, or mallard feather.
Body: Dark, with silver tinsel

From River Angling for Salmon and Trout by John Younger, 1864 (in his style).

First Fly

A black body of fine soft cow-hair, or other fur (in consistence like that from flank of a cow or kyloe), -(kyloe is a small breed of long horn Scottish cattle-)-with a tuft of yellow floss, silk, or fine worsted wool, for tail, and a little red, green, or deep orange twisted thread around the body, about a eighth part of an inch distance between folds, and prick the hair out wit a pin, and shape it as equally over the gold thread as possible, giving it a fine soft hackle appearance; and give a turn or two dark orange, or rather red, round the shoulders, close below the root of the wings. A grey or bright mottled turkey feather use for wings, either from the tail or from behind the quill feathers ion the wing of the fowl, according to size and circumstance, and have the mottle or speckle equally bright on both sides of the feather.

Second Fly

The second fly has in all respects the very same body as the first, the only variation being in the wings, which have what we technically term a white-top. This is a black or dark brown feather, with a little white on the top, from the tail of the turkey for the largest size of fly, or from the rump above the tail for the smaller sizes.

Third fly

The third fly has the same body and tail as the former, with white wings; but prefer those of a pale French white, that is of a light buff of yellowish tinge.

Fourth fly

The fourth fly, in may cases the best, is altogether of a dun colour, body, and wings. Although fox and other furs and mohairs, may be used for the body of this fly, with hackle rolled over it, still I prefer fine woolly cow hair from the flank of a dun-coloured cow or outfield kyloe. This, with a little gold twist rolled

round the body, to give it an insect appearance, and the hair picked out to fall softly in half shading over it, is, when well done, on all colours of fly, better than cock hackles. The proper dun colour is not easily described. It seems to partake of brown and white, as shade of red and yellow, with the slightest tinge of silvery grey, and a yellow tail tufted up with a speck of red. The wings are best when of the same colour, or at least as nearly so a possible, but prefer such as have a tendency to whiteness on the top. These may best be had from the tail or rump of a dun turkey, a fowl precious to a Tweed salmon fisher.

Fifth fly

The body of the fifth fly is made of the dark grey fur of the Hare's lug, mixed with the least quantity of bright red or deep orange mohair, or rather fine pig's wool (if fine pig's wool can be got with a tuft of yellow), over which, at the insertion of such tail or tuft, give a turn or two of red worsted, mohair, or pig's wool. (Follows a lengthy dissertation on dubbing hare's lug-MN) If the hook is of a large size, I approve of a fine gold twist rolled around it, and a short bristled hackle laid in the less of the tinsel. (More extraneous matter- MN) For the largest size of this fly, the ears of the roe-deer are, by my friend elsewhere alluded to , preferred to the hare's lug, as being a beautiful grey, and making a lovely body, either with or without hackle.

The long tuft feathers on the head of the lapwing make a first-rate hackle for this, or for and low-water fly, as the short in the bristle. A wing from the bright mottled feathers of the drake is the best adapted for this body.

Sixth fly or the Maule fly

From the least to the largest size this fly is made up of a medium colour of sky-blue fine wool, with small pallid tinsel, or no tinsel, and very peculiar cock hackle: to wit, black from the root up along the middle stem to fully half the length, then running into red out to the top-and a yellow or light tuft for tail-the wings of a soft mottled turkey tail feather, dark grey.

From The Scientific Angler by David Foster, 1883 (I have put the recipe in modern format)

The Spanker

Tag: Flat single tinsel and cerise floss silk.
Tail: Golden pheasant topping, a few strands of scarlet flamingo's quill feather.
Body: Orange, light and dark; and cerise floss silk bound over an old cock's hackle stained slightly sky-blue; the latter being palmered from the head to the tail; another of these forming legs.
Wings: Turkey, with several side strands of argus pheasant wing feathers, and red, yellow, and puce-coloured feelers or strands.

The Rob Roy

Tag: Gold flat, orange floss silk.
Body: Orange mohair, graduating though full and dark orange to dull red.
Throat: Guinea fowl neck feather, stained yellow, and a cock's hackle (colour not specified-MN), also stained yellow.
Wings: Black turkey feather
Sides: Jungle cock's hackle
Horns: Yellow and red.
Head: Black ostrich herl.

The Spartan

Tag: Gold round, white floss silk and peacock herl.
Tail: Three strands from a green feather from the neck of a peacock, and a few strands of yellow and scarlet lucan (sic) breast and neck feathers.
Body: Hackled with claret stained hackle, wound over with gold twist (heavy round) and bright colored silk.
Throat: Dark blue hackle, and guinea fowl feather over all.
Wings: Golden pheasant's tail feather, ditto neck or tippet feathers for sides.
Cheeks: Blue chatterer.
Head: Peacock's herl.

The Tam O'Shanter

Tag: Red silk silver twist (round).
Tail: A few yellow and red spires of macaw feathers, helped with a few strands of blue or green peacock's neck feathers.
Body: Pig's wool, navy blue, with broad flat silver twist (broad oval silver-NM).
Throat: Rich fiery brown hackle.
Wings: Bustard feather.
Sides: Bustard feather, American wood duck feather; a few strands of argus pheasant's dark feather to be also added in larger.

The Mac Sporren

Tag: Flat silver, and blue silk.
Body: Fiery brown pig's wool ribbed with round gold twist.
Throat: Orange and purple, hackled (stained).
Wings: Golden pheasnts, red sides tail feathers; toppings, large strands of albatross wing feathers, streamers red and green.
Cheeks: Kingfisher's feathers, or blue chatterer.

From The Book of the All-round Angler by John Bickerdyke, 1900

Western Butcher

Body: Dark maroon mohair, silver twist
Wings: Grouse-feather, with two strands blue macaw.
Hackle: Jay's wing, mixed with some dark strands.
Tail: Golden-pheasant hackle.

August Brown

Body: Light brown mohair, gold twist.
Wings: Gled tail or bittern.
Hackle : Dark brown.

From Tips by George Kelson, 1901 (thanks to Mark Kirchner). These flies are not in the Salmon Fly or The "Land and Water"Salmon Flies.

Eve's Fancy

Tag: Silver twist and scarlet silk.
Tail: A topping and fibres of Summer duck. Butt: Black herl.
Body: Two turns of medium blue floss, followed by dark blue seal's fur having a dark blue hackle along it.
Ribs: Silver tinsel.
Throat: Dark blue hackle
Wings: Four or five toppings.
Horns: Red macaw.

Nunwick

Tag: Silver twist and light blue silk.
Tail: A topping and Indian crow.
Butt: Black herl.
Body: Two turns of scarlet floss, followed by scarlet and light blue seal's fur in equal sections.
Ribs: Silver tinsel.
Hackle: Light blue, from blue seal's fur.
Throat: Light blue hackle
Wings: Teal, gallina, and tippet strands; grey mallard, golden pheasant tail, fibres of Summer duck, mallard, two strips of swan dyed scarlet and a topping.
Sides: Jungle.

The Red Tag

Tag: Silver twist and scarlet silk.
Tail: Ibis and two strands of Summer duck. Black herl.
Butt: Black herl.
Body: Two turns of crimson floss, followed by scarlet, crimson and light claret seal's fur in equal sections.
Ribs: Silver tinsel.
Throat: Light red claret and light blue hackle respectively.
Wings: Tippet, gallina, and golden pheasant tail in strands; grey mallard, swan dyed yellow, light blue and crimson; bustard, and mallard.
Horns: Blue macaw.

Empress

Tag: Silver twist and yellow wool.
Tail: Four golden Bird of Paradise (or Cock O' The Rock)
Butt: Black wool.
Body: Oval tinsel, two parts, and violet seal's fur, one part.
Hackle: Violet hackle along seal's fur, ribbed with oval tinsel.
Throat: Blue hackle.
Wings: Two strips of dark brown mottled turkey, golden pheasant tail, grey mottled turkey, two broad strips of swan dyed rose, peacock's herl, Amherst pheasant tail, and two toppings.
Horns: Blue macaw.
Sides: Jungle

The Salmon Flyer
Vol. 11 - No. 3, Summer, 1999

THE CHADHA
Designed and Dressed by Paul Miller

IS THERE A (RED)DOCTOR IN THE HOUSE?

Charles Vestal

This was really going to be easy. All I had to do was contact Marvin Nolte up in the windswept plains of Wyoming because I knew he had the Hodgson book and I'd have all the pattern recipes I needed. But wait, that's not what happened at all. Maybe I'd better start at the beginning and tell this story in chronological order.

Each winter I get stimulated by John Alevras' efforts in putting together a plate of Salmon or Steelhead flies that he then donates to a Trout Unlimited auction. This year was no different and I set about trying to come up with a collection of flies that would make a nice plate. I was thumbing through Fishing Atlantic Salmon - The Flies and the Patterns, by Joseph D. Bates and Pamela Bates Richards when I came to Plate 80, The Doctors. The eight flies on this plate really caught my attention and I decided that a plate full of Doctors - Blue, Silver, Black, Red, White and Helmsdale - would become my project. I could find pattern recipes for all of these with the exception of the Red Doctor.

The text of Bate's book on page 212 states "Even more unusual but certainly interesting is the Red Doctor; it is included (as dressed by P.D. Malloch) in the color plates of Hodgson's Salmon Fishing." Looking at Plate 80, here's the pattern as I see it:

Tag: Oval gold tinsel and yellow floss.
Tail: Topping and Indian Crow.
Butt: Red Berlin wool.
Body: Red floss.
Rib: Oval gold.
Throat: Red hackle fronted by guinea fowl.
Wing: Tippett in strands; married red and blue swan and golden pheasant (bottom to top); teal to the middle of the tail, and a topping.
Sides: Jungle cock.
Head: Red followed by black thread.

Not all materials are clearly visible in Plate 80. It appears that a dark feather is employed in some manner in the wing. With the possibility that this unknown material plays an important part, I moved on to the next step.

I know that Marvin Nolte has a copy of Hodgson's book so I dropped him a note asking for the pattern recipe. Marvin's reply was short and pointed.-He said "Red Doctor? I don't have a pattern recipe for the Red Doctor. I've never heard of the Red Doctor". A subsequent note said, "The Red Doctor has me befuddled yet. I looked in Hodgson. There is no Red Doctor in the plates (or text). The plates have Silver, Black and Blue Doctors; Red Drummond, Red Rover, and Red Ranger. But the Red Doctor is conspicuous by its absence". Marvin also searched over three dozen other reference books including P.D. Malloch's Salmon Flies and How to Make Them without success.

Marvin suggested that since the fly pictured in Plate 80 of the Bate's book was dressed by Belarmino Martinez and since it couldn't be located in any of the old reference books that it might be a modern pattern invented by Martinez. Thus started my search for the pattern and genesis of the Red Doctor.

First, I contacted Wayne Luallen to see if he had ever heard of this pattern. Wayne said that he had not, but he had a friend located in Southern California who has an extensive collection of classic salmon flies including flies dressed by Martinez. Wayne contacted his friend and related the following. "He pulled a plate of flies tied by Martinez off the wall and described a Red Doctor tied by him that was included in that plate, though he said that he was confident that Martinez did not originate the fly. Here is how he described what he saw:

Tag: Oval silver tinsel, pale blue floss.
Tail: Topping, Indian Crow over.
Butt: Red Berlin wool.
Body: Red floss, not heavy or tapered - rather sparse seemingly.
Rib: Oval gold, 7-8 winds.
Hackle: Red beginning at the 4th wind of tinsel.
Wing: Yellow, red, blue and bustard (bottom to top); 1/4" wide teal next to 1/8" wide woodduck to the bend of the hook, woodduck a bit longer than the teal; brown mallard and a topping.
Head: Red followed by black thread.

Wayne concluded by saying "I pressed him re: who he thought might have tied the original, and he had not a clue".

Wayne also suggested that I contact Alex Simpson and see if he had any information. So, I drafted a letter to Alex and simultaneously fired off an e-mail message to Richard Whorwood up in Canada asking for information.

To my joy I received a long letter from Alex and an e-mail from his son Colin (via Richard) that shed a great deal of light on this subject. Alex's letter says, "The pattern was found in a notebook belonging to my son's first fly-tying teacher. She tied flies for Wm. Brown and Chas. Playfair while she was alive. My son and I got to know her when I was enquiring about the dressings of salmon flies mentioned in Wm. Brown's catalogue dated around 1900. After her death, her personal notebook on patterns just disappeared as did most notebooks of fly-tyers; a sad loss to the history of fly dressing and the art. Anyhow, here is the dressing I have of the Red Doctor

Tag: Oval silver and yellow floss.
Tail: Topping and chatterer.
Butt: Scarlet wool.
Body: Light red floss.
Rib: Oval silver.
Hackle: Light red from the second turn of tinsel.
Throat: Guinea fowl.
Wing: Tippet fibers; married yellow swan, black turkey, red and blue swan, golden pheasant tail; bronze mallard, teal, topping, sides jungle cock.
Head: Light red wool.

This is the only information I have on the Red Doctor and I haven't seen Joe Bate's new book published along with his daughter although the book has been in existence for two or three years."

Colin Simpson verified the above recipe and added the following information "My first teacher was Winnie Marowski - her maiden name being Winnie Fraser. Winnie was the inventor of the tube fly and worked in Wm. Browns around the late 1920's. She lived in Aberdeen.

William Brown started the business in 1840. The only William Brown catalogue known to exist or I have seen is the one belonging to my Dad, which dates from around 1900.

William Brown was a friend of George Kelson and fished together often." Since most of us think "Pink" when we see a color called "Light Red" I asked Colin to describe the color. Colin replied "Regarding Light Red, the colour is more of a pale crimson - not as bright as scarlet but definitely not pink". Other information that I've dug up includes a reference to Wm. Brown in T.E. Pryce-Tannatt's book How to Dress Salmon Flies when he is discussing turkey feathers for wings "For cinnamon and white I know of no better firm to apply to than Messrs. William Brown, of 54, Union Street, Aberdeen, who also supply fly-tying materials of all sorts and of first-class quality." A friend of mine in Aberdeen writes that this shop is no longer in business.

1 personally have a copy of a hook size chart from C. Playfair & Co., Fishing Rod & Tackle Manufacturers, Union Bridge, Aberdeen. I obtained this chart from Richard Walker & Son, 35 Belmont St, Aberdeen, while I was in Scotland on a business trip in 1984. I no longer have the original hook chart because I gave it to Ray Smith to add to his hook collection.

Well, where does this all lead? I'm convinced that the pattern given by Alex and Colin Simpson is the correct dressing for the Red Doctor. Further, since this pattern appears in a 1900 catalog we can assume that it is not a modern pattern but one that was developed in the late 19th century. Since William Brown and George Kelson were friends and fishing partners, maybe the pattern is the result of their collaboration. The pattern as dressed by Martinez is not significantly different especially in the body and main wing colors.

OBSCURE PATTERNS II

Marvin Nolte

More flies from references you may not have.

From The Driffield Angler, by Alexander Mackintosh, 1806, in his own words.

> Of Salmon Flies-These, for the spring season, must be made much larger, but not quite so gaudy as those used in the summer, viz. let the hook be a No. 1 the shank three inches or more in length, and small at the end, in order that the head of the fly may be neater: the feather for the wings, the darkish brown speckled, from the turkey's tail, and

mixed with about twelve harts (sic) from the peacock's tail, dividing them that there may be six in each wing; the next feathers for wings to these large flies, are kite, buzzard, bittern, and heron's wings. The body of the first fly, called that tartan-fly, is of four, five or more different colours, yellow, light blue, green, dark red, orange, and purple, and as many more colours as the fancy may lead the angler to; for the fork, or tails, use the dark mottled feather from behind the wild mallard's wings, and a black or red cock's hackle over the body, for the legs and head.

The remaining patterns, put into modern format.

A Second Fly

Wings: Mottled turkey tail, of a reddish cast
Body: Light brown bear fur mixed with dark brow hog's wool and gold colored mohair
Tail: Golden Pheasant crest feather
Ribs: Gold twist
Hackle: Large black cock's hackle
Throat: Red hackle (natural-MN)
Head: Deep red hog's wool or mohair

Black Dog

Wings: Bluish feather from the Heron's wing intermixed with turkey tail
Body: Lead colored hog's soft wool from under the ear
Ribs: Small gold twist
Hackle: Large black cock's hackle
Head: Dark green mohair and dark green silk

A Fourth Fly

Wings: Kite or Buzzard
Body: Light blue hog's wool and a little lead-colored mohair, mixed Ribs: Small gold twist.
Hackle: Dark blue
Tail: Bronze mallard
Head: A little of the same as the body, and dark blue silk

A Fifth Fly

Wings: Grey turkey tail .
Body: Two strands of copper peacock herl and two of the Green Plovers or Lapwing's topping
Ribs: Silver plaiting (flat-MN)
Hackle: Dark tinged cock's hackle (Furnace?-MN)
Tail: Two cock pheasant barbs
Head: Dark red silk

The Golden Fly

Wings: Golden Pheasant, Common Pheasant, Parrot, Peacock herl, Turkey tail, mottled Blue Jay, one on each side of the above mix
Body: Broad gold plaiting
Hackle: Natural red hackle
Ribs: Dark green silk
Head: Peacock herl and green mohair

The Silver Fly

Same as the Golden Fly except:
Body: Broad silver plaiting
Hackle: Light blue

Should you have access to The Driffeld Angler take the opportunity to read his tying instructions. They are detailed, particularly as regards attaching the gut loop.

From Ogden on Fly Tying, by James Ogden, 1887, in modern format:

Number 1

Wings: Bronze Mallard over Golden Pheasant tippet
Body: Claret or puce floss
Ribs: Gold tinsel
Tail: Small gold crest feather

Number 2

Wings: Same as Number 1
Body: Orange and black silk or mohair
Hackle: Furnace

Number 3

Wings: Jay, set upright
Body: Water-rat fur
Ribs: Silver tinsel
Throat: Blue dun
Tail: Topping

TYING THE NO.3 SPIRIT FLY cont

Gary Grant

To continue on from where I left off in January on dressing Blacker's Number 3 Spirit Fly, I had just completed explaining the tail of the fly. While, it would be appropriate to continue with the body of the fly I need to digress slightly before continuing on.

John Betts sent me a very good letter after the January issue discussing the dressing of Blacker patterns and those from that time period that I feel need to share with you. I really appreciate John taking the time to send me his thoughts on this topic.

I discussed the wing of the Spirit Fly as being "married:" John pointed out, that most of the modem salmon fly tiers seem to dress their flies invariably with married wings. John points out that, "The term "married" does not come into the vocabulary, ih book form at least, until the late 1800s, nearly a half century after Blacker's death ...I think you'll find that there was no marrying, except by accident, in Blacker's time."

After reading John's letter and going back and reviewing some of the works from that era, I feel I fell into the same trap that most of us do when dressing these patterns, we complicate the patterns and the result is something hardly traditional. Blacker himself calls the wing a "mixture." And his flies and those of others from that period were mixed wings that were for the most part tied in one's fingers. Also, creating a mixed wing was for good tiers, a careful and precise operation. Looking back through the plates in Blacker's book, I can see that it was not just a matter of tying in a bunch of different fibers to the hook.

John also brought up another interesting point in his letter, about Blacker and other commercial tiers in that era that is worth sharing. "Blacker was an accomplished tier, and in all likelihood able to do what he said he could. He was also in the tackle business and intricate flies sold better than drab ones. Complex flies did two things 1) upped the ante for competition, and 2) looked terrific in the case."

Thanks John for keeping me straight.

Because I am out of room for this issue, I will need to continue this in the October issue. That will give me sometime to go back and research a few more books, Tavener, Francis Francis, and a few others to keep from getting too modem and losing the traditional approach, that is, perhaps the true hallmark of these flies.

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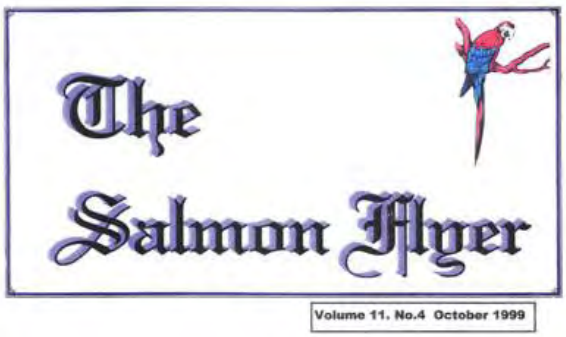
Vol. 11 - No. 4, Autumn, 1999



THE GREEN HIGHLANDER POMPADOUR
Dressed by Flemming Dam Nielsen

TO THE MEMBERSHIP

Gary Grant

Well this is it the last issue of the century. As a matter of fact, this is the last issue of the Salmon Flyer. It has just become too difficult to maintain this publication. Over the past two years I have received fewer and fewer articles for publication, even though there is about 120 members.

This year Marvin and I have contributed the "lion's share" of the articles. Marvin and I written almost two articles each for every issue this year. These articles were almost 60 percent of the text in the publication. Marvin and I both believe that the Salmon Flyer was slowly evolving into the "Gary and Marvin Show" and this was not the purpose of the Salmon Flyer.

The Salmon Flyer was established in the 1980's, during one of the Federation of Fly Fishers, National Conclaves in Livingston Mt. At that Conclave a "Group" of dedicated salmon fly dressers met and developed the concept for a publication where they could share with one another throughout the year. The "Group" was never established for the purpose of building egos. It was, though, established for the purpose of sharing among ourselves. When we stop sharing we defeat our initial purpose, and hence why it has become necessary to call an end to this publication. Basically, we have stopped sharing with one another.

Wayne Luallen, one of the founding members of the Group, wrote me a while back and discussed that- each member, at least initially, was to send an article per year, and if they did not, they were not doing what was agreed upon. The editor was to send a reminder periodically to send articles, but it was up to each member to do their part. If we do not, it is everyone's loss. There is so much to share with each other -ideas to build upon. That was what the Flyer was about. I do not know what else to write on this subject. I had hoped that the appeals for articles and suggestions would not go unanswered, but nevertheless they did.

I know several members did everything they could to keep things going. Contributing articles and helping others to write their own. But, it would have been nice if just 10 percent of the members would have sent just one article a year. It would have been a much easier task. If you are not happy with the decision to stop the Salmon Flyer, neither am I or Marvin. It just seems that there is just not enough interest to keep it going.

If you paid your membership dues for next year, Marvin will see to it that you get your money back. I think that what ever is left in the treasury might best be donated to the International Fly Fishing Center in Livingston MT. Since it was in Livingston that the concept for the Salmon Flyer was developed. But, that is up to the membership.

So long, and may all your feathers be straight and stress free. May each of you have a wonderful Holiday Season and Happy New Year.

DRESSING THE NO. 3 SPIRIT FLY (part 3)

Gary Grant

When we left off, we had just completed tying in the tail. Next comes the green and red parrot tail veiling. A very suitable substitute for the parrot tail is dyed goose shoulder. Select several fibers of each color, no more than a half-dozen of each would be appropriate. Now a modem approach would be to marry the fibers and form left and right sections or miniwings and mount the "mini-wings" on each side of the golden pheasant. This is perhaps, somewhat extreme and not necessary. Particularly, if you are after a more traditional approach as I discussed in the last issue. Keeping more to the approach similar to what Blacker might have done, I tie in a few of the green fibers down along the golden pheasant crest approximately one-third as long as the crest feather. Two wraps of thread is sufficient. Next tie in the red fibers with two wraps of thread. Remember to minimize bulk, the thread should be flattened and wrapped side-by side. Not one wrap on top of the other.

Now do not cut the waste ends of the goose just yet. If you cut the waste ends of the goose you will have a very large bump that when covered by the ostrich herl will still be unsightly. This is because the thickness of the goose is much more than the floss body that follows the butt. The best approach is to cut half the goose very close as you would normally do. And the remainder of the goose where the first body joint would be. This allows the puce (purple) floss to cover some of the goose and be approximately level with the bottom of the ostrich herl. Instead of the bottom of the ostrich herl being slightly above the floss.

After the goose is trimmed, next prepare the ostrich herl butt. Select a herl with a barbule length that is about 1/16 inch (2-3 mm). Strip about one-half inch of the barbules off the barb and bend the barb about one-quarter inch from the start off the barbules. Tie in the herl at the point where the bend starts with two wraps of thread. Now here is a little trick that I picked up from Marvin when forming an ostrich herl head. Wax the thread thoroughly and take several turns of thread where the butt is to be placed. The wax helps keep the herl in place, allowing each turn of herl to be placed very close to one another without sliding or shifting position. While this is not a traditional method it is a technique that may help your display flies. Wrap several turns of herl edge-to-edge to cover up the tail tie point. Next tie off the herl with a turn or two of thread and trim the excess herl.

Advance the thread to where the first joint will be. There is going to be four body segments, and you will want each to appear equal in size. Because of the throat and wing, you will want the last segment to be slightly longer than the others. If you measure everything perfectly, and make each segment the same size, the final segment next to the wing will appear shorter than the others. This will result in a fly that will look off balance. It is a similar concept with most jointed body flies. The rear section will always appear longer then the front section is they are both of equal length. So if you are dressing a Jock Scott, Baron or similar fly, divide the sections using a 40160 rule. Back-"half is 40 percent of the body length, and the front"half" 60 percent.

Now tie in the floss and wrap the floss to the butt and back to the tie down area-very similar to how you would create a tag. Next tie in the gold oval tinsel and take three turns and tie it off. After the tinsel is tied off, trim the waste ends and prepare the brown hackle feather. The feather barb length should be slightly less that half the gap length. First fold the hackle then tie in the hackle by the tip and take two or three turns and tie off.

A different method of folding the hackle that is perhaps, a little uncommon and "easier" than folding it in your hand is to use a pair of scissors. This technique is done with the fly in the vise-a tool that Kelson and Blacker did not approve of. First hold the feather by the tip and stroke the barbs towards the butt of the stem. Next tie in the feather by its tip with the shiny side up. Or in Kelson's mellifluous vernacular, "the good-side-to-town." Next take your scissors and place the blade next to the stem, angled down, and lightly run the blade from the tip to the but of the stem. You may need to repeat this step once or twice more to fold the barbs down. Next place the blade on the other side of the stem and repeat. You should now have a perfectly folded hackle. I know a few of our readers are now in a state of shock, for using such an unscrupulous method to fold a hackle. But, if Blacker or Kelson had used a vise, perhaps they would have used this technique also!

For each segment that follows you will repeat the above steps only the hackle barbs will be slightly longer as you proceed to the final segment. If done properly each hackle will be slightly longer than the preceding one, with the final segment hackle barb length being about the width of the hook gap. The four segments will consist of first puce (purple GG) floss with a brown hackle, followed by red floss with a green hackle, followed by green and yellow floss with a puce hackle (purple GG), and finally blue and orange floss.

Ensure you leave plenty of room for the wing and throat. Now the wing is a mixed wing. In the previous issue I discussed that the wing is not married. And that married wings do not appear in salmon fly literature until Kelson in the 1890s. Reading back through some of the salmon fly tying books the concept of married, built, and mixed wings is a very confusing subject. Alcott in his book Building Classic Salmon Flies, perhaps adds to the confusion. Alcott discusses mixed wings but, throws in terms like built and married in the discussion. He writes about several different authors in the late 1890s through the early part of the century, like Kelson, Hale and PryceTannatt. Each wrote about mixed, married, and built wings when discussing how to dress a fly. But, it would perhaps be best to list the authors chronologically starting from Blacker and their associated techniques. While I have not done this for this dissertation. I believe it might be interesting to follow the terminology and techniques in dressing a salmon fly from Blacker to Hale. Perhaps, then much of the confusion regarding mixed, married, and built wings would be cleared up for the novice salmon fly dresser.

Back to the fly and the mixed wing – the wing consists of golden pheasant tippets, bustard substitute, barred woodduck, teal, scarlet macaw (turkey tail dyed red-GG), yellow macaw (turkey tail dyed yellow-GG), brown mallard and a topping. Referring to the plate in Blacker's it appears that the golden pheasant is tied in first. I would prepare two tippets about a gap length in width and match them back-to-back. I like to position the first black bar directly above the butt. After the golden pheasant is tied in, I would tie in the throat, which is a red hackle. Measure the barb length, fold the hackle and tie in. Take three or four turns and tie off and trim. Pull the hackle bards down to form the throat and clear the top of the wing of hackle barbs. Otherwise tying in the remainder so the wing will be difficult. Blacker also used two red toucan feathers in the throat. I do not feel these are necessary on this pattern. The red cocks hackle will provide the necessary color and affect. But, if you wish, CDC dyed red make s a suitable substitute.

Next tie in left and right strips consisting of about four barbs each of the red and yellow dyed turkey, and bustard substitute, just in front of the throat hackle. Remember these are not married to one another. These strips should be slightly longer than the golden pheasant tippets, and should lay along the golden pheasant tippet. Place each strip very slightly in front of the preceding strip.

After the strips of turkey and bustard substitute are tied in, tie in a strip of barred woodduck on each side of the tippet. I prefer a broad strip of wood duck, perhaps about a dozen fibers. Have the barred wood duck extent to the first black band on the golden pheasant tippet. The broad strip of barred woodduck can look very striking on a fly. Just do not make it too over-powering. The brown mallard that follows can be tie in as a strip similar to the teal or wood duck, or you could tie it in a roof. Referring to the plate in Blacker's a roof does not appear appropriate. The mallard on the fly plate appears to be a strip tied in similar to the teal and wood duck. Now finally add the sides of kingfisher, not chatter!

Now for the final parts of the fly, the topping, horns, and head. The topping should be measured to the length of the wing and the tip of the topping should end at the tip of the tail. Before tying in the topping strip some of the stem of any barbs that would be in the way and flatten the stem with flat nose pliers. You may want to also, nick the underside of the topping with your fingernail to "open up" the topping slightly to allow the topping to cascade over the wing. A very nice look on a display fly. Finally, bend the stem slightly at the tie in point to facilitate tying it in. The horns on Blacker's flies appear to be tied in

such that they follow the top of the wing. Most of the flies you see tied today have the horns on the side of the wing and they cross at a point just above the end of the hook. Since for the most part, we have tried to keep the pattern relatively similar to how it was tied over 100 years ago-tie the horns in so they follow the top of the wing. You may want to refer to many of the Schmookler patterns found in each of his two books on materials to see just how the horns are positioned.

The herl head can be insidiously difficult. This final step should not be rushed. First trim the topping and horns so that there is a taper to the eye of the hook. If you trim these off with a blunt or abrupt edge, the herl will not stay put. After trimming the waste ends, prepare the ostrich herl by folding the hed, similar to folding a hackle. It is not very difficult and is actually easier than folding a hackle. Use your fingers and not scissors for this one!

Next thoroughly wax the thread, create a very smooth base of thread, and advance the thread to the edge of the horns. Next tie in the herl by the tip, and trim the waste end of herl. Now wrap the herl in tight close turns, similar to creating a butt. The folded herl should sweep back into the wing rather than standing upright like the butt. After taking four or five turns of herl, tie it off, trim the waste end and take a few more turns of thread.

You can cover the head completely with thread and create a nice taper to the eye and whip finish-covering everything with thread. Or, you could create a nice taper to the eye of the hook and whip finish. The first technique is appropriate if you are going to use a clear head finish. With a clear finish, you do not want any materials showing through the thread. With the later technique, you can take a black lacquer and finish the head. The black lacquer looks very nice, particularly if you use two coats.

Sometimes with a clear finish, the head of the fly turns white a few months later. The black lacquer will not. Not all clear finishes fog up or turn white. Hunter's carries a very good clear finish, called "Cellire." It is reasonably priced at two dollars for a 1.5 fl oz bottle. The only aspect of the Cellire I do not like is that it takes about four or five coats to create a smooth high gloss finish as compared to two for the lacquer. It's up you to choose.

WHO IS FRASER SANDEMAN?

Marvin Nolte

While reading T. Donald Overfield's book, G.E.M. Skues: The Way of a Man with Trout I encountered the following in a letter from Skues to the Flyfisher's Club Journal, Summer 1915. "The novice [the Novice is a continuing character in Skues's letters] has broken out in a new place. He has taken to salmon fly dressing. He borrowed my copy of Pryce Tannatt's [sic] book on the subject, laid in immense stocks of material, and was not long in getting together a number of books illustrating salmon flies from Jones on Norway to Hale, Fraser Sandeman and Kelson."

Now Pryce-Tannatt, Jones, Hale, and Kelson are some pretty tall company. Who is Fraser Sandeman? He wasn't listed in any of Bates's books, or anywhere else, that I could find. Letters went out to fellow salmon fly tiers, inquiring about this Sandeman guy. Friends with years of experience and loads of salmon fly books hadn't a clue. So I dropped the search for lack of progress. Time passed and I obtained a copy of Bibliotheca Piscatoria by Westwood and Satchell, the fishing book hunter's bible.

There, in the supplement was this entry: "Sandeman (F.) - By Hook and by Crook. Illus. By author. 4to. 18s. Net ... (London) H. Sotheran, 92-4." OK, now I know what he wrote and when he wrote it (1892). Progress but no cigar.

Better than a year later Judith Bowman's latest catalog arrived. There it was! SANDEMAN, FRASER - By Hook & by Crook. 4to - Southeran, London - 1892 large paper edition limited to 100 numbered & SIGNED copies (#11) - 255 p - 11 beautiful color plates of salmon flies & insects + b/w text drawings by the author - printed on hand made paper - teg, others uncut - bound in full off-white linen with gilt titles - spine sunned, as usual, else VG+.

Drop everything, dial her up, MasterCard poised.

"Hello"

"Hello Judith, this is Marvin Nolte."

"Marvin, what can I do for you?"

"Just got your latest catalog. Is number 649 still available ...?

(Hold breath) "(After interminable pause) ...

"Yes."

YES! (Exhale) "Thanks Judith, you made my year."

Limited to 100 copies, no wonder I never heard of it. And folks, a gem it is. Mr. Sandeman's quaint 19th century style includes referring to himself in the plural, as in "Then the fun began; for the fish, in answer to the increased pressure applied, took a run of about 60 yards straight down stream, then came to the surface, lashing out with head and tail on the rough waves, making us tremble for the fate of our single gut." Among the angler's enemies given in Chapter III are cows, otters, and pigs.

The book includes sound advice, "Waders should always be tried on at time of purchase, as the different sizes are made of the same proportions, whereas with men it is not so." There are trout pattern recipes, including one for a Drake (large mayfly dry) guaranteed to float, "Body - A piece of india-rubber tubing, of the size used to make the stems of artificial flowers for ladies' hats. It can be obtained in several shades, the pale yellowy green being perhaps the best for this purpose.

To dress the body: Cut off about 2 inches of the tubing, thread it on the gut down to the hook, whip it securely to the hook over the joint of the tail-feathers, and varnish, leaving the long end of silk for future use. Next insert the nozzle of a pair of small bellows into the open end of the india-rubber tubing, stretch the tube slightly, and inject sufficient air to swell it; then whip securely at the shoulder. . ."

What was most interesting to me was, of course, the salmon flies. Chapter XIII, How to Dress a Salmon-Fly, covers all the steps (some of which are illustrated in color) but is not exhaustive. Also in that chapter is a glorious two page plate of hooks. The real gold is in Chapter XIV, Original Patterns of Salmon-Flies. Fourteen patterns are listed. Nine of those are illustrated in color. The plates are exquisite, detailed, and hand colored; still bright after more than a century.

Original Patterns of Salmon Flies

Number 1

Tag: Gold wire or thread, purple silk.
Tail: Golden Pheasant topping. Butt:Black ostrich harl [sic].
Body: Jointed in three divisions of equal length of yellow, orange, and red floss silk(in order from tail). Gold tinsel from butt to tail.
Hackle: In three joints, yellow, orange, and red. Shoulder-hackle: Black hackle red at points.
Wings: Mottled brown Turkey, grey Turkey, Golden Pheasant tail, dark Mallard, 4 narrow slips of blue-dyed Swan, 2 broad slips of dun Turkey, 4 fibres Peacock harl.
Cheeks: Two bold slips of barred feather of Summer Duck extending well up the fly.

Number 2

Tag: Gold tinsel thread and yellow silk.
Tail: Golden pheasant topping.
Butt: Black Ostrich harl.
Body: 1/3rd orange floss silk, 2/3rds dark blue silk and gold tinsel.
Hackle: Blue Cock's (dyed).
Shoulder-hackle: Blue Cock's (dyed).
Wings (mixed): Of light Mallard, brown mottled Turkey, Golden Pheasant tail, Gallina, yellow dyed Swan.
Topping: Golden Pheasant.

Number 3

Tag: Silver tinsel
Tail: Yellow floss silk.
Body: Pale blue silk; silver tinsel Shoulder hackle: Reddy brown

Wings (mixed): Light Mallard, Golden Pheasant tail, a few fibres of yellow died Swan, a couple of sprigs of Golden Pheasant rump.

Number 4

Tag: Gold tinsel thread, yellow floss silk.
Tail: Sprig of Golden Pheasant rump.
Butt: Black Ostrich harl.
Body: Yellow floss silk, black hackle, gold tinsel. Shoulder-hackle: Black.
Wings: Golden pheasant tail, broad slip of dun Turkey, two wide slips of barred Summer Duck.
Topping: Golden Pheasant. Cheeks: Kingfisher
Head: Black Ostrich harl.

Number 5

Tag: Gold tinsel thread, yellow floss silk.
Tail: Golden Pheasant topping.
Body: Dark blue floss silk, brown hackle light in colour towards the points, silver tinsel and silver thread together.
Butt: Black Ostrich harl.
Shoulder-hackle: Same as body.
Wings (mixed): Grey Turkey, Bustard (Indian), Golden Pheasant rump, unbarred Summer Duck, and red dyed Swan.
Horns: Blue and red Macaw.
Topping: Golden Pheasant.
Head: Black worsted.

Number 6

Tag: Gold tinsel thread.
Tail: Golden Pheasant tippet, and one small slip each of red and blue dyed Swan.
Body: Four turns of yellow floss silk, the remainder in three equal divisions of pale blue, scarlet and black pig's wool. Gold or silver tinsel.
Hackle: Fiery brown.
Shoulder-hackle: Dark grey. Flat oval gold tinsel braid. [This seems a contradiction, my guess is that Mr. Sandeman means gold lace - MN]

Wings (mixed): Golden Pheasant tippet, Mallard, Golden Pheasant tail, 2 slips Dun Turkey or, better still, of Glead Hawk, Gallina, 2 slips grey Turkey, 2 slips each yellow and blue dyed Swan.
Head: Black worsted.

Number 7

Tag: Gold tinsel.
Tail: Full whisp [sic] of orange pig's wool.
Body: Lower half orange pig's wool, upper half brown pig's wool. Gold tinsel.
Hackle: Brown.
Shoulder-hackle: Brown.
Wings: Under. Dark green Mallard, Upper. Brown or dun Turkey, whitish at tips.

Number 8

Tag: Gold tinsel thread.
Tail: Unbarred Summer Duck, Golden Pheasant tippet and topping.
Body: Lower half, Orange pig's wool; Upper half, Bright red pig's wool Gold tinsel.
Body-hackle: From middle to shoulder dark red. Broad gold tinsel.
Shoulder-hackle: Fiery brown.

Wings (mixed): Dark brown Turkey, mottled on lower half. [Beats me. Perhaps dark brown turkey and mottled brown turkey, mixed - MN]

Number 9

Tag: Gold tinsel thread.
Tail: Golden Pheasant topping.
Body: Lowest third, Orange pig's wool; Upper two thirds, Brown pig's wool. Gold tinsel.
Hackle: Light red.
Shoulder-hackle: Light red.
Wings: Glead Hawk.

Number 10

Tag: Silver tinsel.
Tail: Golden Pheasant tippet.
Body: 2 turns each, yellow and red pig's wool. Remainder green pig's wool.
Hackle: Green.
Tinsel: Broad silver.
Shoulder-hackle: Light brown.
Wings: Under, Teal; Upper, Boldly mottled grey turkey, 2 small slips red dyed Swan.

Number 11

Tag: Gold tinsel.
Tail: Yellow floss silk.
Body: Three turns orange pig's wool, remainder black pig's wool. Gold tinsel.
Hackle: Light reddy brown. [Ginger? - MN]
Shoulder-hackle: Light reddy brown. [Ginger? - MN]
Wings: (Mixed). Golden Pheasant tail, Bustard, grey Turkey, white and red Swan, 2 wide slips of Glead Hawk.

Number 12 Bull Dog (old pattern revived)

Tag: Gold tinsel thread, and red floss silk.
Tail: Golden Pheasant topping and one Kingfisher feather.
Butt: Black Ostrich harl.
Body: 2/3rds up from tail medium-sized silver tinsel braid, then a butt of black Ostrich harl, remainder blue floss silk and silver tinsel; two Golden Pheasant toppings introduced behind the 2nd had butt, blue dyed Cock's hackle over the blue silk portion of the body.
Shoulder-hackle: Blue dyed Cock's hackle, and over it a Teal feather wound as a hackle.
Under Wings: Two bold sprigs of Golden Pheasant tippet.
Wings: Four strips of black dyed Swan and yellow dyed Swan put together so as to form stripes, i.e. alternately, next a bold sprig of Mallard on each side.
Cheek: A Jungle-Cock feather, and over it a Kingfisher.
Head: Black Ostrich harl.

Number 13

Tag: Gold tinsel.
Tail: Teal and Golden Pheasant rump.
Body: Bright red pig's wool and gold tinsel, red hackle.
Wings: Brown mottled Turkey.
Shoulder-hackle: Teal, dressed over the wings.

Number 14

Tag: Gold tinsel, blue floss silk.
Tail: Golden Pheasant tippet and Summer Duck.
Butt: Peacock harl.
Body: Half of round silver braid, then purple silk and orange silk, gold tinsel.
Hackle: Blue, then brown.
Shoulder-hackle: Gallina.
Wings: 2 broad strips red Macaw, 4 broad strips Glead Hawk, 2 stripes [sic] (3 fibres each) of blue and yellow Macaw, 2 broad strips Argus pheasant.