

# American Fly Fishing Literature

## *Of Streams and Dreams*



*Rocky Ford Creek*

### **2012 Exhibit**

## The Paul and Mary Ann Ford Fly Fishing Collection

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*“Mike” counted cross stitched by Mary Ann Ford*

“Sparse Gray Hackle” wrote famously that reading about fishing was almost as good as pursuing the sport--unforgettable advice. “Mike “ studied “Sparse” and concluded the canny gentleman had a point. Read well, friends.

# *Of Streams and Dreams*

Our journey this year begins on British Columbia's steelhead waters. There, in distant pubs and camps, with ladies and gents well into their nut brown ale, fact and fiction are sometimes interchanged. "Tales" of fly-fishing North America's magnificent silver lightning—the steelhead—become very "long." Then we travel south to our beloved Stilly's North Fork and beyond. Too, the reader will find splendid trout along water paths of compelling seduction. A bit of whimsy is our last offering.

## Steelhead Titles

**A** snippet to start us off. *I stood with boot feet toes barely touching the Dean River's slightly off color flow. My first cast was poor—the Black Practitioner way too short I thought. Two rod lengths down my abbreviated drift, silver lightning grabbed hold and catapulted across the river and up over a tree limb on the opposite bank. "Snap!" Tough twelve-pound Maxima leader busted. And I thought. "The fish are here, they are against the bank and my faith is fulfilled." That was forty years ago.*

Alevras, John. **Leaves from a Steelheader's Diary.** Amato, Portland. 2010. Introduction by Alec Jackson. Illustrated by Eldridge Hardie. Pp. 158. First edition. Paper cover over boards is beautifully designed. Boards are maroon fabric with gold leaf imprinting on face and spine. Ribbon page marker. This is of a steelheader's camp life--fishing the Babine and Kispiox. The book is unusual for two reasons: it tells us a story about the ups and downs of camp and fishing life in terms we have experienced and he doesn't bore us with "how-to-do it" minutiae; too, for a trade edition book, its presentation is superb.

\_\_\_\_\_. **Leaves from a Steelheader's Diary.** Deluxe limited edition. 31/100. Signed by the author and illustrator. Quarter bound in white leatherette with maroon leatherette boards and gold leaf imprint on face and spine. Slipcase is heavy maroon leatherette with one of the author's favorite steelhead flies inset.

Arnold, Bob. **Steelhead Water.** Amato, Portland, 1993. Pp. 296. Illus. by Loren Smith. First edition. He loves the Stilly Norrth Fork and beyond o the Skagit, Sauk, Wenatchee and Grand Ronde. His dedication includes the names of scores of well-known steelhead anglers with whom he fished or talked. Lots of interesting anecdotes. BUT, he likes hatchery bred steelhead. That is anathema to this angler who sees them as the bane of native fish.

\_\_\_\_\_. **Steelhead & the Floating Line.** Amato, Portland. 1995. Pp. 162. Illus. by Loren Smith. Photos by Alec Jackson. Introduction by Alec Jackson. Limited edition. 47/60. Steelhead fly inset under front cover. Signed. Angling with the likes of George McLeod, Lee Wulff and Mike Kinney on the North Fork Stilly and elsewhere.

\_\_\_\_\_. **Country/City: A Year at the River.** Kingfisher Press, Rochester, WA. 1998. Pp. 278. Limited edition. 8/100. "Skunk" fly inset under front cover. Signed. Arnold tells of a year spent mostly at his rustic cabin above Oso on the North Fork Stilly. These vignettes describe the beauty, challenges and characters of country life as a steelhead fly fisher pursues his sport.



*autumn on the Methow*

\_\_\_\_\_. **Country/City: A Year at the River.** Kingfisher Press, Rochester, WA. 1998. Pp. 278. Limited edition. 8/100. "Skunk" fly inset under front cover. Signed. Arnold tells of a year spent mostly at his rustic cabin above Oso on the North Fork Stilly. These vignettes describe the beauty, challenges and characters of country life as a steelhead fly fisher pursues his sport.

Clegg, Pierce and Peter McMullan. **Babine: A 50-Year Celebration of a World-Renowned Steelhead and Trout River.** Amato, Portland. 2010. Pp.192. First edition. DJ. Green boards with silver printing insets. Fabulous cover designed by Dave Hull. This is of fish, and tradition and "characters." It is for those who see beyond the river.

McMillan, Bill. **Dry Line Steelhead And Other Subjects.** Amato, Portland. 1988. Pp. 144. Deluxe limited edition in gray slip case. 82/200. Signed. Bill tied a Washougal Olive inset in this edition. Bill McMillan is a scholar of the waters who understood early on that Washington State's ill-advised steelhead hatchery program would succeed in failure. Bill is an angler of almost divine "catching " talent with emphasis on taking fish on the surface. A note from Bill's fiancée to PF is inset under cover.

Sirois, James. **KIMSQUIT CHRONICLES: Dean River, British Columbia.** Skookum Press, Hagensborg, B.C. 1996. Pp. 161. First edition. Paper. Large format. Signed. Superb black and white photos. This is a social, economic and fishing history of an immense natural resource. This is

## River Journals



*a local friend*

**F**rank Amato, a talented fly fisher, tier, writer and most importantly, Portland, Oregon publisher of fishing magazines and books, introduced his River Journal book series in 1993. His approach was formulaic. The volumes are about famous American waters and were written by talented, well-known authors. The books are large format with eye-catching color photography on their covers and throughout the copy. Narrative combines storytelling with where to fish and how to fish. The books are of fifty pages or so. Hard back editions are printed in editions of 450 to 500 or so. In addition to the hard backs, Amato published the same series in paper back.

The list that follows does not contain annotations. The Journals are new with their paper covers unblemished over synthetic fabric-like boards. River Journal titles tell the prospective reader enough!

### 1993

Holt, John. **Madison**. Volume 1, Number 1.

Joyce, W. David. **Silver Creek**. Volume 1, Number 2.

Tullis, Larry. **Green River**. Volume 1, Number 3.

1994

Route, Anthony, J. **Kenai River**. Volume 2, Number 1.

Probasco, Steve. **Yakima River**. Volume 2, Number 2.

Lingren, Arthur, J. **Thompson River**. Volume 2, Number 3.

Supinski, Matthew. A. **Pere Marquette**. Volume 2, Number 4.

1995

Tullis, Larry. **Henry's Fork**. Volume 3, Number 1.

Kustich, Rick. **Salmon River**. Volume 3, Number 2.

Probasco, Steve. **Big Hole**. Volume 3, Number 3.

Shields, Daniel. **Penn's Creek**. Volume 3, Number 4.

1996

Staples, Bruce. **Yellowstone Park**. Volume 4, Number 1.

O'Brien, Chip. **Sacramento River**. Volume 4, Number 2.

Meyer, Deke. **McKenzie River**. Volume 4, Number 3.

Marriner, Paul. **Miramichi River**. Volume 4, Number 4.

1997

Martin, Craig. **Rio Grande**. Volume 5, Number 1.

Thomas, Greg. **Clark Fork**. Volume 5, Number 2.

Linsenman, Bob. **Au Sable**. (Mi.) Volume 5, Number 3. (Shows internal 1998 date.)

Richmond, Scott. **Crane Prairie—Deschutes Headwaters**. Volume 5, Number 4.

1998

Richmond, Scott. **Rogue River**. Volume 6, Number 1.

Pettine, Eric. **North Platte**. Volume 6, Number 2.

## Whimsy?

**A**rtist and publisher Jane Timken of New York City issued her deluxe, limited, twenty-six copy edition of *Cotton in* 2001. Yes, the *Cotton* of Walton fame. Special Collections (the Ford Collection) holds copy “K” of that luxurious title.

But earlier, Ms. Timken, had conceived the notion of depicting the English alphabet in book form, with each letter representing a fishing object. She described the book as follows:

**“ AN ANGLER’S ALPHABET is 70 pages, 9.5 inches square, handset with wood and metal type, and printed on Zerkall mould-made paper. The end sheets are Hahnemuhle Bugra Butte; the boards are covered with Zerkall, printed as a flat. Each letter is illustrated with a pochoir stencil. The edition is slip-cased and bound by Carolyn Chadwick. ”** Timkin Editions, New York, 2000. This is copy “i.” The “i” page shows a fish over a ruler.

What caused the artist to produce such an extremely expensive deluxe limited edition? What would the market have been in 2000? Perhaps anglers who were art collectors? Or did Ms. Timkin care? One can only speculate.



**Annotations by Paul Ford**



*“Whitehorse” overlooks the Stilly North Fork*