



PHILLIPS EXETER ACADEMY

Class President

Brian Davis

Class Vice President

Keith Johnson

Class Correspondent

John Pope

Class Agent

Ed Wall

Planned Giving Chair

Bob Pruyne

Cell for John's address

November 1998

Dear Classmates,

Exeter has been a busy place since my last letter to you.

Our 73 percent participation in giving to the Academy is a reflection of the spirit of "Fabulous Fifty-two." Sincere thanks are due to all of you who participated and manned the phone banks. I am very impressed by the continued hard work and dedication of Ed Wall and Bob Pruyne.

The big news on campus is the impending new Science Building, about which you will hear more in the coming year. This is a badly needed capital improvement.

Those of us who were in Mr. Mayo-Smith's Biology class in Senior year will never forget the old Science Building. You will recall that there was a Science Fair to which the entire town was invited. Right before the Fair, "Mayo's" Krait (or some equally venomous snake) escaped and was last seen slithering into one of the air ducts of the building. Each member of the Biology class was assigned an air duct to guard, lest the snake pop out and crawl up the Mayor's pant leg, which might have set "town/gown" relationships back somewhat.

The snake was not heard from again, although at our last reunion a student told me that, if you are in the Science Building late at night, a slithering sound can be heard coming from the air ducts. The architects for the new Science Building have given assurance that the air ducts will be Kraitproof.

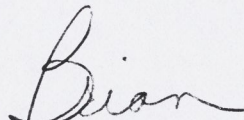
Thanks to the generosity of John Warner '72, the Alumni/ae Office now has the technology to offer all classmates free permanent e-mail addresses. This new account will have the following features:

- Free service
- Lifetime e-mail address
- Mail forwarding
- Easy "cyber" communications between alumni/ae

You will receive along with your new e-mail address, detailed instructions for set-up, operation and maintenance of your account.

Annual dinner season is approaching for Exeter associations around the country. This is a great time to catch up with classmates and fellow alumni/ae.

Best wishes to all of you,


Brian Davis
Class President

→ Sent Sam to
John Pope.

10/22

Dear Datus,

I've just finished reading, with real pleasure, Pheasants of the Mind. Although not a hunter, I liked it for its content, and I liked it for its style, and what its style revealed about you. Its content of course includes not just the hunting and bird information, but the mental chase that animated it. "Hunting matters if it is worth a gun made like a cathedral; 'La chasse au bonheur.'" (Have you read Donald Hall's Life Work? He finds the source of contentment in "work so absorbing that you do not know that you are working" — a little like your "At the edge of fatigue comes relief: your head floats free of your legs.")

It's a handsome book and full of practical poetry, and of humor. This weekend I'm visiting an old friend who's an avid bird hunter, and I intend to give it to him. I'm sure he'll enjoy it.

I see Betty Bates from time to time — she's living in a Retirement community about 2 miles from The Orchard — and I'll certainly speak of you to her.

I'm glad that you approve of the poems (I trust that you know that they were a gift from John Pope) and glad to think that they helped with

something you were writing.

Best wishes,

Charlie

Note for xmas card.

R.J. Darlington

91 Stuart Crescent, Winchester, Hampshire. SO22 4AS

011-44-Telephone: 01962 853247

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Answered 9/5/98

Datus C. Proper, Esq.,
1085 Hamilton Road,
Belgrade,
M.T. 59714,
United States of America.

171

27/08/98

Dear Datus,

I hope that both yourself and the family are keeping well, and that you are enjoying a first-rate season. The Itchen is in first rate order this year, due largely to good winter rainfall. Good river flow, excellent weedgrowth, but, for some strange reason, hatches of small fly, olives etc., have been worryingly poor. Oddly though, we are now getting some incredible hatches of mayfly - *E. danica*. These begin to hatch about mid-May and are trickling on well into August, there's even the odd one or two coming-off at the moment; but as for other fly, it's been poor. The mayfly makes for some exciting fishing, bringing up the bigger trout, but the lack of small spinner during the evenings has made for disappointing evening rises. Any way, I trust you're fairing rather better.

By the way, do make a note of my new address, phone number etc. I'm well and very relaxed and now able to concentrate on important and interesting things, nearly all to do with fishing. Thanks for the invitation to visit, with your Christmas card, I'd love to one day, but money is a bit tight at present.

That leads me to the principal reason for writing you. My very dear friend, Simon Ward is visiting the States next month (September). A family wedding takes he and Jane, his wife, to the "Land of the free", and he intends spending a little time in Montana during their stay. I wonder if you would mind it if he contacted you when he arrives in your vicinity, in the hope that you could provide him with some advice on the fishing out there. I believe he expects to be there about September 28. Simon is a very good fly-fisher and knows all the American fishing jargon - he even calls 'casts' tippets! - or something like that, it confuses me!!! He keeps a nice stretch of the river Dever (Test tributary). He's a guide and instructor here and a very accomplished fly-dresser. I believe you will find him a most interesting chap. He's spent seven years or so researching G.S. Marryat, which is marvelous since we knew so little about the man. He has even located Marryat's own fly box filled to capacity with beautiful double split-winged floaters. I won't tell you more because then you will, hopefully, want to have a session with him in order to hear some of the fascinating facts he's uncovered. Simon is in the throes of producing a book, which I think will be very important in setting straight the history and development of modern dry fly fishing.

may be
late

Unfortunately, I don't have your telephone number, it belongs to a 'former life' and I don't want to run the gauntlet obtaining it, so I will have to rely on the services of International Directory Enquiries and hope you're not ex-directory.

Gordon Mackie sends his compliments. Gordon's just published a nice book called "Flyleaves and Waterside Sketches", I believe he is arranging to let you have a copy. Nick Lyons, apparently wasn't enthusiastic about its potential for the American market, which is a shame, because it's a nice easy to read book, a super 'bedside book' for fishermen, but in fairness, it's very English. The same publisher, Robert Hale - London, is reprinting Skues's "Itchen Memories" next March and I have written an introduction for it. I think they will make a fine job of it and will let you have a copy when it's out.

I trust that Anna and Scotty are all O.K. I daresay Scotty is quite a young man now, is he a keen fisher/shooter? It seems like a thousand years since we last had a good 'chinwag' I hope we'll have the opportunity to put that right before too long.

My very best wishes Datus and kindest regards.

Yours Ever

Ray. Nick may have been
banned by the other recent book.

67, SWAINS MEADOW
CHURCH STRETTON
SHROPSHIRE
England

SY 6 6HT

01694 722748

5/8/96

Bozeman
Montana

Dear Mr. Proper,

I hope you will forgive the nerve of a foreigner writing to you unmasked. At Christmas my small son bought me a book on fishing from a second hand book shop. It proved to be "What the Trout said". Since that time I find that I have read and reread the book. The book has come to me at just the right time in my evolution as a trout fisher. I have never really thought much about the design of flies and have been happy with traditional patterns, although I have usually tied them on size 16 Redditch scale hooks, as I find mayflies and spinners more effective in the smaller sizes. Up to recently these have caught me all the trout I could want on our small Midland streams; but now I find I don't catch as many fish as I used. Obviously, I am growing older, so

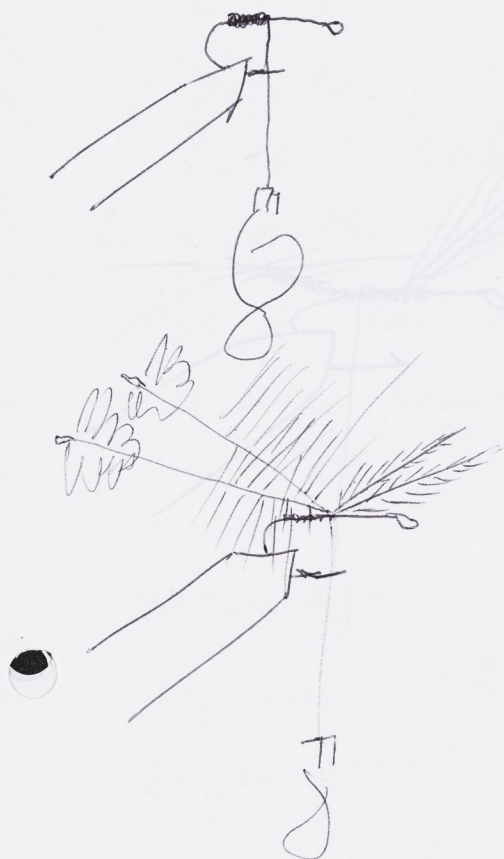
(2) my stamina and keenness are blunted, so that where I used to catch fish by determination, eyesight and fieldcraft; now I have to think a little more in order to make a decent basket. And your book has prompted me to think about the problems of imitating insects.

Allow me to summarise some of the more important problems of imitating a mayfly.

- ① The hook must be strong enough to be able to hold a strong 2lb+ trout, and be at least size 14 Redditch scale. 16 " 17
- ② The hook must not be seen by the trout.
- ③ The design must be good enough, so that it is possible to use a strong enough nylon tippet to hold a large trout head if necessary. .005"
- ④ The design must be as light and simple as possible, so that it floats well and alights softly, and be simple to tie.
- ⑤ If one is going to design a fly with the hook out of the water, then the upright wings must not be in a position to obstruct the hooking of a trout.
- ⑥ The body must be lifelike.
- ⑦ The wings must be tall and give a good silhouette
- ⑧ The tails must help the fly to land upright (and stay upright)
- ⑨ If the fly is going to ride low in the water then the body must be the right colour.

Please find enclosed a few samples of a fly design that may go some way to answering some of the problems. I give the method of tying overleaf.

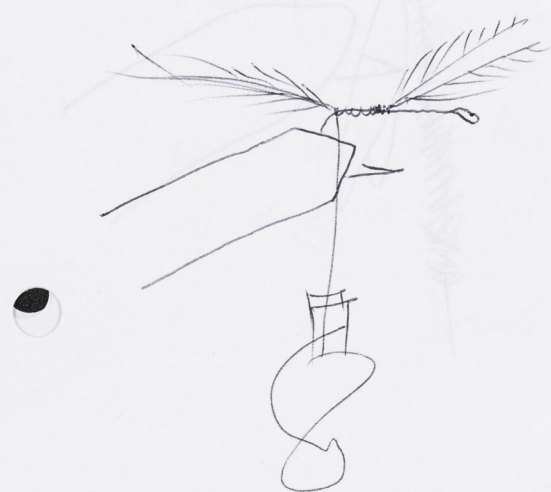
Waxed silk wound onto rear half
of a downeyed 14 strong hook.
Use fly hook or a sedge hook.



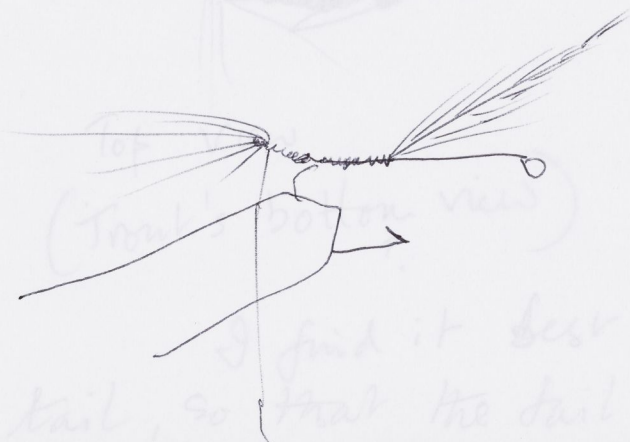
Take two feathers from a cocks cape:
Usually quite large ones. Stroke the
fibres back that won't form the wings.



Bind these two feathers (shiny sides together)
to the top of the hook.

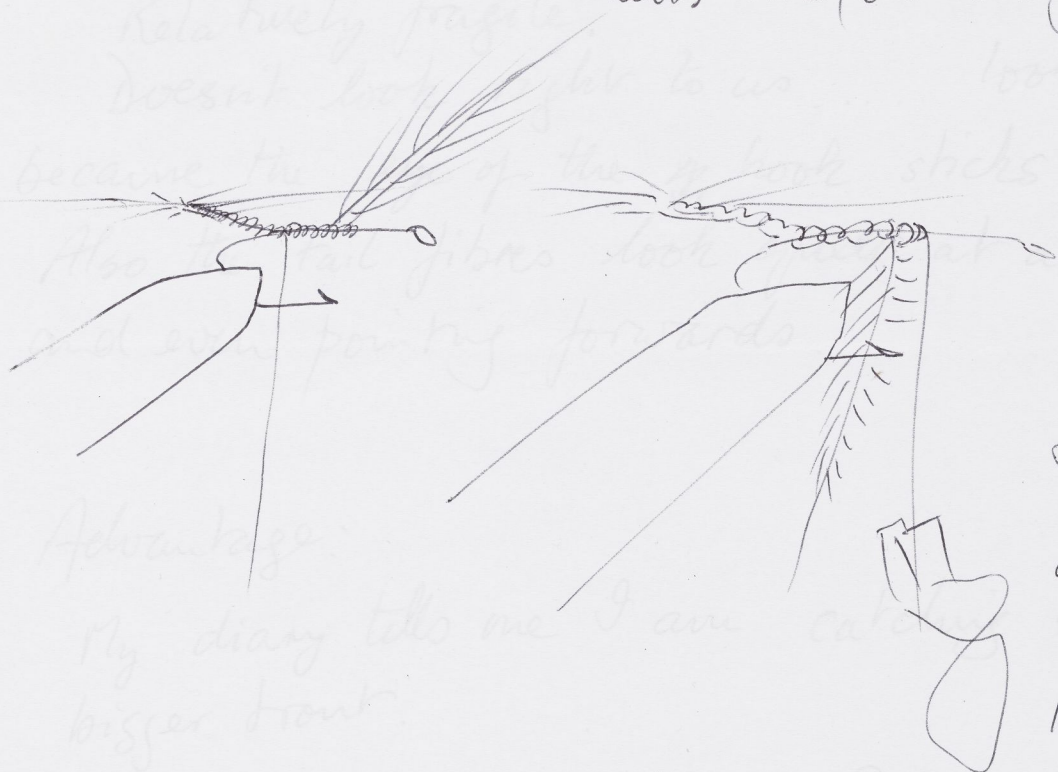


stroke the fibres (which are normally
waste) back along the stalk and hold
them gently between thumb and
fore finger. With the other hand,
wind the silk towards the tail.
while doing this, slightly twist the
hackle stalks in the same direction
as the ~~my~~ silk.

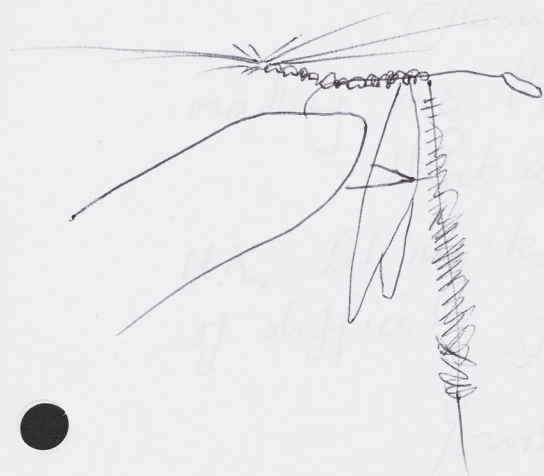


When you come to the end of the hook
lift up the tail and wind the silk
gently round the two stalks and
fibres. Make about five turns, then
five more back to the hook. At
this stage release the left hand
and look at the way the fibres
spread out. If they are not quite on

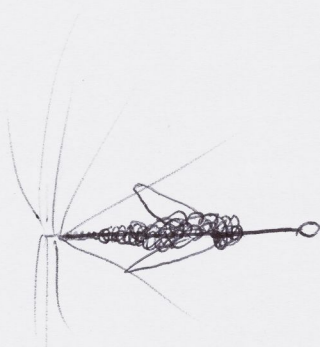
a horizontal plain, then increase the tension on the silk until the tails are (on a horizontal plain)



Now. Wind the silk forward and figure of 8 the two separate hackle tips ~~into~~ under the hook and preferably behind the hook point



Dub on guard hairs of suitable fur (I prefer hare's ear and face) and wind it round the body of the fly, fairly rough. I find it a fiddle to use gold wire, so I just use the silk to bind it in. Finally cut the waste from the end of tail. Leave about a dozen fibres.



Top view
(Trout's bottom view?)



Side view

I find it best to varnish the shank of the tail, so that the tail fibres are firmly anchored.

Disadvantages:

Relatively fragile.

Doesn't look right to us looks too big
because the eye of the ~~xx~~ hook sticks out.

Also the tail fibres look queer at a ~~an~~ 90° angle
and even pointing forwards.

Advantage:

My diary tells me I am catching and landing
bigger trout.

Thank you Mr Proper for
making me think.

What is a send? If you are ever in
U.K. let me know and I will show you a bit
of difficult fishing.

Yours sincerely,

Jim Davies.

J. G. Davies

Wrote 2/16/90
Suggested he use
"Talks with Trout"

301 Cartee St.
Coudersport, PA
February 2, 1990

Dear Datus:

I thought I'd better run this (enclosed) by you before I went any farther with it. Imitation may be the highest form of flattery, but, on the other hand, I wouldn't want you (or your lawyers) gunning for me either.

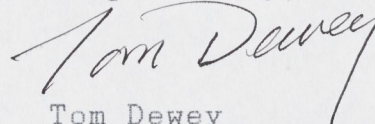
My audience is not as well-educated; I'm trying to address some of the basics, herein. It might even become something of a serialized column if I end up with the local newspaper, for example. On the other hand, an outside chance exists that the Penn'a Angler might use it...they've been after me for something. (Maybe not; this is potentially pretty heavy "stuff" for a Commission sponsored publication!).

In any event, your comment(s) would be appreciated. Simple solution, of course, is to re-title:

What the Trout Says
Streamside Chats With Trout
Secret Talks With Trout
An Angler Talks With Trout
ad infinitum

Tel: 814-274-7981

Respectfully,



Tom Dewey

WHAT THE TROUT SAID...

about fishermen and fishing

About the first week in December, '89 I left the stream to make my last entry in my fishing journal for the year. A good year, in the main...581 trout caught, 557 released to be caught again, some, perhaps, by that freckled-faced youngster I met on the _____ farm. Good luck to you, future fisherman!

Not meeting many fellow fishermen in 180 trips (38, to be exact and ten of those in one hole at one time), I was rather hard put during the slow times (ah yes, there are and always will be the "slow" days) to find ways of passing the time. (Fishermen are notorious "gabbers"; I suspect some actually lie in wait of others in order to regale the innocent with tales of awe).

It was then I realized that perhaps I talked too much. Indeed, perhaps all fishermen talk too much. The real gift is to learn to listen...to the wind, to the birds, to the water, but most of all - to the trout. It occurred to me the trout knew the answers, if only I would listen.

Lest you think I'm alone in my apparent flight from reality, you should come to know Datus Proper. Datus is the first (to the best of my knowledge) to talk to the trout and sales of his published conversations (**What The Trout Said**, Nick Lyons Books, New York) have been substantial. But Datus and his trout mainly talked about fly design and behavior and stuff like that. I had some different questions.

Let's start with a beautiful June day on the Allegany above Coudersport. We'd had some lousy weather through May - water abnormally high and the normal pattern of hatches had been upset through most of the early season. I'm having it out with a nice rainbow I had caught earlier in May (the 26th, to be precise):

Rainbow: Hey, don't I know you? Yeah, must be you...no one else would wear such a silly fishing hat.

(I'm listening, but not too sure I like what I hear. My straw hat is light, cool and keeps the sun out of my eyes)

Me: Look you silly twerp...if you're so smart, why are you on the end of my line. A little more respect, or into the frying pan. Understand.

Rainbow: Sorry about that, but you'd be bored too, if you were in my shoes, er...fins.

Me: How come.

Rainbow: Well, there's not much to do. No fishermen.

Me: I've noticed...and such a nice day, too.

Rainbow: Yeah, every year it's the same thing. April, May these guys are all over the stream...casting just about everything but their spare tire, wading up and down, up and down, crashing about. Believe me...it's a barrel of laughs for most of us. Of course, some of the youngsters and especially my hatchery cousins get taken in. But what do they know. A piece of worm looks just like a food pellet.

Me: Wait a minute. As a rainbow, you started out in a concrete raceway yourself. So how come you're here.

Rainbow: Well, I was lucky. The year they put me in the landowner got ticked-off at some slob-fishermen who showed up and the next day posted this land. So I had a chance to learn the ways of the stream. Believe me, it wasn't easy. Nearly starved until I learned to muscle out the natives. And it's still tough...you see those guys - the brooks and browns - can have little ones. I can't. Another reason it's boring...sex, you know.

Me: Let's not get into that. But you know, you can't have it both ways. Posting gave you a chance, now you're complaining because no one shows up.

Rainbow: Don't be too sure about "both ways." You've heard of catch-and-release; in fact, you caught me a few weeks ago. You see, it's like this. I like the game...fishing, that is. I just don't like ending up dead. So, I'll cooperate...give you a good battle. Just don't go horsing me around, stuffing your fingers up my gills. How would you like someone ramming their fist into **your** lungs! Now you fly fishermen are pretty good about it, especially when you bend the barbs down. Look...you can hardly see the hook mark from our previous encounter. But those bait fishermen. They're absolute murder. That # 6 hook goes all the way down, you know. Just can't get it out without shredding my insides. Could cut the leader and the hook will dissolve, but it's still awfully chancy.

Me: OK. That makes some sense, especially since it's beginning to cost a king's ransom to raise you guys in hatcheries in the first place. But what about the kids, or the people new to fishing. Seems like sort of a bum deal for them not to be able to take a few trout home to dinner.

Rainbow: You got it! A few, not a whole tubful. Frankly, I suspect most of us end up as cat food anyway. Remember - we are supposed to be a "delicacy." Savored, with a nice wine, fresh garden greens, parsley garnish...the works.

Me: Food, ah yes. No, no...I mean food for thought, rainbow. Maybe you're right. I'll think on it.

And I did, as back into the pool went one plump *Salmo*

Gairdneri.

I have a strange feeling that the rainbow, despite his distance from his wild relatives on the west coast could tell me much more. Perhaps, more than I cared to know. But for a virtual cacophony of sound, you can't beat the wild brook trout of Potter County.

It's late in October. Certainly, the best time of year to be out in "God's Country." Brilliant blue sky, golden foliage, sparkling mountain stream, the typical "jump-across" variety.

Brook trout water - no need to be especially fussy about fly selection. Lay it next to the grassy bank...bang, slap, dash...you're on to molten reds, whites, greens flashing and twisting in the green current. And goodness - THE NOISE!

Brook: Hey you, what do you think you're doing.

Me: Fishing, stupid.

Brook: So what's a grown man like you doing that for...especially at this time of day. Shouldn't you be making a living, or something.

2nd Brook: Yeah, what's the idea. Don't you know we are THE native trout. That we are especially vulnerable. We have to really hustle to stay alive, and here you come along and take advantage of our situation.

Me: What do you mean...take advantage.

1st Brook: Come on now - don't you even know where you're fishing. This is a freestone stream. We gotta depend a lot on what falls in, because freestone water isn't always very fertile for aquatic life like mayflies and stuff. Remember, we're way up here in the mountains - the headwaters, like they say - and the canopy of the trees, the steep mountain sides and everything aren't exactly like your lovely pasture streams.

2nd Brook: So you see, man, like, we get real hungry.

(For a moment I wondered if I hadn't stumbled onto the trout equivalent of an inner-city street gang; but I hung tough!)

Me: But that's what I like about you guys. No pretense, no darling behavior - just raw hunger. So you're not very big. Pound for pound, you got spirit.

1st Brook: Spirit, he says. Same 'ol cliches. Yeah, we've always had spirit. But tell me, how much good did it do when you and your "civilization" cut the timber, plowed the land, poured all that junk into the water and drove us out. You know - we used to be down there in the valleys, too. But blast it all, we

gotta have nice cold water. Anything over 65 degrees and we go...well, belly up. So we come up here to get away from it all and you follow right behind.

2nd Brook: And leave your trash, more'n likely.

Me: OK OK you got a point. 1. I don't have any trash with me. 2. I want what you want: clean, cold water and a chance to "get away from it all." 3. And I'm not going to 'take advantage' -- you all go back to live another day. That OK with you?

1st Brook: Yeah I guess so. (I don't think trout can shuffle their fins in embarrassment, but I'm not sure...) I guess you're OK. Com'on, let's see how you do on my brother up there under that log. Bettcha can't!

(But I DID. And many more. Actually lost the count. But what fun!)

Bad enough to be jerked around by pesky brooks; even worse to **overhear** a conversation by the browns of _____ Creek. _____, a smallish tributary of the Allegany is virtually cut off from the rest of the fish world.

To solve an almost annual problem of flooding in Coudersport in the 50's, the Army Corps of Engineers persuaded the politicians to build an enormous concrete ditch through the center of town, little understanding that the real problem was the excessive clear-cut timbering and lack of contour plowing in the valleys above town. As a quick-fix it worked - no more floods!

In the process, the engineers devised a steep ramp to accelerate the flow of the smaller _____ Creek where it joins with the Allegany, eliminating just about any possibility of a brown working its way up stream out of the larger river.

Then, about 10 years ago, as part of "Operation Future," the Fish Commission stopped stocking _____ Creek. And as night follows the day, the fishermen left to pursue the hatchery trucks elsewhere.

Consequently, there has developed a rather sophisticated population of rotund browns, quite content, apparently, to have things their own way. The local anglers, for the most part, have left them alone. Indeed, very few locals "harvest" these fish...it's more fun to listen in on their round tables:

1st Brown: You know, the other day I heard old man Garner - down by the bend hole - tell a tourist there "warnt no trout left here nomore sins the C'mission stopped stock'n."

2nd Brown: Probably believed him, too. God knows, we've got a fine gang. Something about this stream. I certainly have

no complaints. Especially since I don't have to compete with those silly stock trout for food.

3rd Brown: But the best news is we're not overrun with fishermen...gives us a chance to feed, spawn, go about our business. I'll tell you though, some of these locals are tough anglers. Some of them actually know what they're doing. That one guy with the spinning outfit...trebles...he's nailed me twice.

2nd Brown: I've seen him. But not often. All in all, we've got a pretty good deal here. Hey, have you seen the crazy guy in the straw hat?

1st Brown: Ain't he something. Thinks he can conn me into a "little talk." As if I'm about to tell him anything.

3rd Brown: I pretend I don't hear very well. It usually works.

4th Brown: Well, I don't know about that...I kinda look forward to him. Not a bad guy...just a little, er, "un-informed." I try to help him out from time to time.

1st Brown: Really. What does he want?

4th Brown: Not much. Knows he's got a lot to learn about trout. Figures since we don't have contact with any of our kin that we might be like the trout of days gone by. Got me to thinkin', too. Maybe we are.

1st Brown: Thinking again, are you. Probably some of that old German "intellectualism" in you. They say it's in the genes, you know. Come to think of it, your spots are pretty bright.

2nd Brown: Yeah, but what does he **really** want.

4th Brown: Said something the other day about us being "unique." Thought it was a shame we didn't get any recognition, that he and his kind should be especially careful about how they use the river. And so on. Not exactly a do-gooder, but, well, you know - concerned.

3rd Brown: Well, what's he worrying about. We've got pretty good landlords.

4th Brown: He knows that. But still...he worries about the future. His kids, and his kid's kids...all of that.

2nd Brown: Hey. Did you guys see that rod flash?

1st Brown: That's him. Run for it!

4th Brown: I'm staying. I'd like to talk some more.

THE COTTAGE

Genteel's Companion Protector of Hearth and Home

December 7, 1990

Dear Mr. Datus C. Proper,

I write to you in the capacity of reader, Exonian, Editor, and hunter, and found your latest book, *Pheasants of the Mind*, most satisfying to all levels. As I have been engaged in New York in business for four months now, the reminiscences of the introspective tendencies of outdoor sport caused me to pine for the country, and my Springer Spaniel, whose tractable disposition and unflagging willingness are being engaged by another, at liberty to hunt. Though I am jealous of his affections, I will not deny my dog the pleasure of fulfilling the service which God has aptly designed him for.

"The Cottage", the magazine of which I am Editor, will release its first issue before Christmas. In it we endeavor to revive the positive attributes of antiquity, while discussing topics of current interest, and to demonstrate both a radical concept of time travel, (the first issue is dated 1913, the second 1853, the third 1939), as well as maintain the virtues traditional to this country which are rapidly deteriorating. Our publication will be primarily read by the international art world, for the publishers have there made a success for themselves, and I wish to demonstrate to such an audience the inherent beauty of the chase. In the second issue we will review a new book by Richard Brookhiser, (Senior Editor of *National Review*), entitled *The Way of the Wasp*. Also we are including the first chapter of the history of George Washington, an excerpt from a forthcoming historical novel of Sam Houston, as well as our standard reviews of fashion, society, politics, and culture. All shall be presented in the language of 1853. It is with this issue in mind that I wish to excerpt the tenth chapter of your book, *Pheasants of the Mind*, or commission a new article by you, for your style is well suited to the concept of our magazine. Were we to reprint a chapter of the book, we should be able to include it in our second issue; I do not know how much time you require for a new essay.

All this is dependent, of course, on your approbation. I should be very grateful for your attentive response, that we may comply with any conditions by your person or your publisher as well as meet the deadline for our printer.

I remain,
Your Humble Servant,

Jeffrey Dean Gasperini
Jeffrey Dean
Gasperini

714.3848067

Jeffrey D. Gasperini

c/o "The Cottage"

79 135 Broadway

Williamsburgh,

City of Brooklyn,

New York.

11211.

Blair C. Prosser
1058 Hamilton Road
Belgrade, Montana

Arizona State University

Department of Zoology
Tempe, Arizona 85287-1501
602/965-3571

2-23-93

DATUS:

I have just now gotten around to reading your Pheasant book, and it occurred to me that I haven't even thanked you for sending me one. It's good, and I am looking forward to reading the rest of it -- especially the part about "armored pheasants" -- a concept in which I believe most fervently. Thanks.

I called Chuck and got one of his catalogues. Looks good. I'll send him a Mexican Game Trails and some other titles and see if they do O.K. by him. It's hard to find hunting; fishing book distributors as you know all too well.

I agree with you that a 10 bird quail limit will do little for Meun's Quail. If I were God, I would retain the 15 bird bag limit for Gambel's Quail and close the season on Jan 31. at the latest. As for Meun's Quail, Five is the limit of respectability in my

opinion -- especially now that these little beauties
have become so popular.

Thanks again for the good book, and I
hope to see you again come December.

Cheers,

Dana