

Get the Blue Dan article

He didn't write till he had something to say.

A watershed (1950)

In the mainstream of evolution descending
from Britain — Dame J. or Someone

used some of this in intro to British edition
of Xines' first book

*He is as
important
a figure as
American angling
has had —
he was an
American original.*

By Datus C. Proper
WITH PAINTING BY JON Q. WRIGHT

VINCENT C. MARINARO'S HOUSE was at 600 East Marble Street in Mechanicsburg, Pennsylvania, but he lived on the banks of the Letort Spring Run. At least, he seemed to live there during the summers I knew him, starting in 1971. If we spent an hour or so in the house before fishing, it was because the tackle was stored there. A big Winesap tree shaded the back porch, and Vince's rods had been planed from bamboo strips in that small, screened room. Usually we'd take one of the finished rods, or two or three, out of a battered leather case which, he said, "had been over a lot of iron bridges." I'd hold the screen door open carefully so the tips wouldn't snag. Then we'd cast on the lawn as the sun dropped. Vince would compliment the old tree for setting a crop of apples that would do him and his wife all winter. I'd compliment him on his rods, which was easy. He wouldn't compliment mine, but he would allow that one French rod might get the job done. And then we'd go and do the job.

On the banks of the Letort, Vince Marinaro took root like a gray-barked hickory stump. He fit there as woodcock fit in alder bottoms and brown trout fit under clots of elodea. Part of it was that Vince moved slowly in his later years, because of a bad hip. I'd thrash my way through a mile of ragweed without seeing a rise—nothing rises in the Letort while the June sun is still hot—and then I'd thrash back, sneezing, and see Vince planted in the riverbank reeds, rod sticking up like a flowering stem and eyes sharp on the wrinkle of current where a fish would show

Casts No



People
Marinaro
(ask Nick if this
should be used
again.)
should not use again
- in a Lyon book.

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Under the Apple Tree



when its time came. A cigar would be branching out from the corner of Vince's mouth. Probably he did not actually smell like tobacco and bulrushes and limestone mud and the pollen of every tree in the mid-Atlantic states, but that's the way my memory of him smells.

The sun, after a 32-hour day, would drop behind the trees and give us a few minutes of evening. The sulphur mayflies would float down the stream and Vince would get two or three trout, including the best of the evening, which was likely to be about 16 inches long, a little thin, with a pink sheen along the sides and big black spots: the old Letort strain, which always made Vince happy. In the near-dark, his long, pale rod would flicker a few more times, throwing line back high over the greenery, dropping "puddle casts," and perhaps bowing to another fish as a pair of late mallards whistled up the river.

Vince won't be on the Letort's bank again but I haven't a proper obituary in me. He was a private and compartmented person. He liked to talk about what was under a few of the lids and I made no attempt to open the others, which may be one reason we got along. Some scholar will do a lot of research on Vincent Marinaro. He is as important a figure as American angling has had. What I have is a few years of memories that are sharp but disconnected, like film sequences without a script.

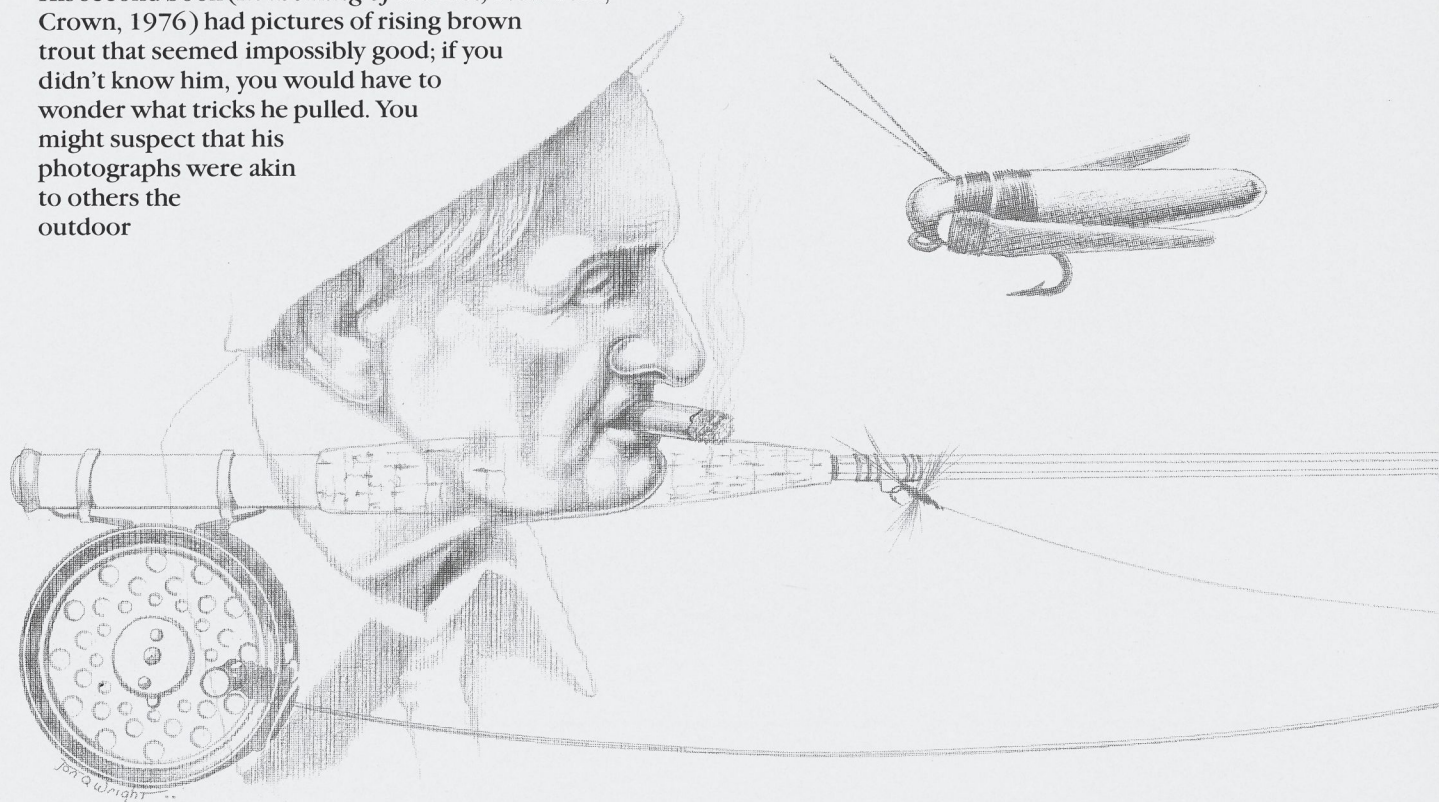
VINCE DID NOT WRITE two important books just because he happened to be in the right place at the right time, though of course that helped. He did everything well, if he was interested in it, and worked at it until it was perfect.

His second book (*In the Ring of the Rise*, New York, Crown, 1976) had pictures of rising brown trout that seemed impossibly good; if you didn't know him, you would have to wonder what tricks he pulled. You might suspect that his photographs were akin to others the outdoor

magazines used to run, with fish performing faked leaps. But Marinaro's pictures were as uncompromising as the man behind the camera. He set up blinds along the banks of the upper Letort and ran countless rolls of film through his old Leica with the reflex housing. The trout were all stream-bred, unconfined, rising to natural insects. The river was open to fishing, so anglers could and did try to catch those fish. If you have tried to see Letort trout, let alone photograph them, you will understand the dimensions of the problem.

Vince's reputation, however, had been made by *A Modern Dry Fly Code*, first published in 1950. The worth of a book must be a matter of opinion, but I will not be isolated in suggesting that it was the first great innovative American work in its field. That field is fishing with flies that imitate natural insects. There were, or course, other good fishing books in American by 1950; there were even two excellent ones on imitative flies (by Jennings and Flick). This, however, was a subject on which Vince and I did not agree, as I discovered when he went through a manuscript of mine in the mid-1970s. Jennings and Flick were honest and sound; they knew their trout and their natural insects and, in my view, both men tied splendid floating flies in the traditional design. Vince, however, had a low opinion of the Halfordian (and Catskill) dry fly. For him there were no good traditional dry flies.

In *A Modern Dry Fly Code* he reproached Skues for not having "emancipated" the dry fly as he did the wet. The Halfordian dry fly was, he thought, no more than a maladapted wet fly—so you can imagine his opinion of Americans who were using it in the mid-20th century.



The *Code* provided abundant and clear alternatives. Marinaro had rethought the design of the dry fly from head to tail. It is important, however, to be precise on what he did and did not do. In my view, he proposed more successful new dry-fly designs than any writer in history, by a wide margin. It is fair to say that he did for the dry fly what Skues had done for the wet. At the same time, the *Code* was squarely within the great English-language tradition of fly fishing. It is impossible to think of the book being written in any other language. (This is my opinion—not one that I recall discussing with the author.) As between the English and American schools, he clearly found more guidance in the former. He collected English books, flies, and tying materials. But within the great tradition he was an entrepreneur, not an adapter.

Originality has its costs. Americans were still waiting for the great American novel long after it had been published; the *Code* was similarly ahead of its time. A mutual friend told me the first edition was remaindered in Philadelphia for a dollar a copy. A few years later, before the new edition of 1970, the 1950 edition was sold for a hundred times the remaindered price—which, of course, did nothing for the author's bank account but must have made him feel better.

In the time I knew him, Vince was wary of the angling public, and of other authors too. Perhaps the *Code's* slow reception left a mark on him, but someone who knew him in the '50s will have to address that.

For me, at least, 1950 was the watershed year in American fly fishing. In the years since, other good books have appeared, and vast (though still very incomplete) work has been done on American trout-stream insects. There could have been no better model than Marinaro. He was a lawyer, and the *Code* made good case law: a book that could be argued before the court of anglers for decades without proving flawed. Vince claimed nothing that he had not done, repeatedly. There were no evasive generalities to fail scrutiny. Sources got credit. If you open the book today for the first time, you will have no feeling that you are reading something dated. Everything in it works, and always will.



Code:

- ☐ Divided tails. (This was an important advance. Divided tails help greatly in persuading a winged fly to land and float in the correct position. As far as I know, Vince was the first who thoroughly understood the role of tails in the dry fly.)
- ☐ The "thorax" tie, with hackles wound well back from the eye of the hook and a thorax formed in front of them. (Since 1950, many other mayfly designs have adopted this principle.)
- ☐ An arrangement of hackles designed to make the fly float flat or slightly nose-down on the water, like a real mayfly. (Marinaro's original design is still used but is difficult to tie, and many successors use easier designs.)
- ☐ A series of terrestrial flies, including an ant with hackle in the center of the body, a jassid, an innovative grasshopper, and a beetle. (I'm not clear as to precedents for all of these flies, but it is certain that Marinaro played a major role and that his book gave most American anglers the idea of fishing with terrestrials.)



VINCE DID A LIFETIME of angling research but did not publish frequently, and most of his occasional articles reappeared as chapters in his second book. I am aware of only three other pieces of published writing: one in *Outdoor Life*, one in the first volume of *Fly Fisherman*, and the foreword to my 1982 book. Perhaps other pieces will turn up. It is clear, though, that everything he did will get attention from historians, so I should say a little more about the foreword. It taught me some things about him.

Most of his contributions had already been made—via the *Code*—before he saw my manuscript on the design of trout flies. Of the 38 designs I listed, three were completely Marinaro and seven others had been heavily influenced by him. Even that count excludes the impact of his V-tail, which improves almost any dry fly.

To my surprise, Vince had little to say about the actual designs I had described or their origins. He must have disagreed on some points (like the usefulness of the traditional dry fly), but not on the facts. On style he had important, though not detailed, suggestions. "Never give readers more than one thought per page," he counseled. Several times he opined that too much reasoning was packed into a page or a chapter. The chapter he seemed to like best was the first, on the importance of listening to trout. (I later made the other chapters more like the first.)

He clearly liked the idea of assessing a wide range of designs. (He had not done so, nor had he used the term "design," though he was our greatest fly design-

Marinaro found graphite rods lacking in soul, repulsive, almost slimy to the touch. He objected to overwhelming trout with technology.

er.) Now, Vince could be counted on for a brutally frank critique, which is all I had sought, but his reaction encouraged me to ask for a foreword. He thought about this for months, and worried aloud. I suppose he knew that a blessing would be important to me, though we did not discuss that. What he said was that he had been asked to read a number of manuscripts over the years and had announced a policy of no forewords. If he did one now, he would make other authors unhappy. (It was perhaps the only time I heard him express concern about stepping on toes.) But he said he'd think about it, and when he decided to go ahead, he did so with a generosity that was also typical.

He seemed to feel a continuing responsibility for the book after its publication. When we went fishing, he would give me new ideas and bits of information that he had collected. On our last trip of 1985, he told me of his surprise in finding a 1966 book (by W.H. Lawrie) which used the term "design" and analyzed traditional wet flies in design terms. That discovery gave me a chance to rectify an oversight before my second edition.

I suppose that if he had not chosen to put so much of his intellectual energy into fishing, lawyer Marinaro would have enjoyed being a judge.

7 HERE ARE A LOT of bamboo rods I have not handled, but of those I have, the ones Vince made were the best. They started, at the long end, with a double-handed salmon rod. His personal favorite was a 9-foot, 3-piece, 4-ounce rod for a 6-weight line. (He was unable to wade much because of his hip, so he wanted a long rod to clear the bank foliage.) My favorites were the 8- and 7½-footers, which weighed about two-thirds as much as my own rods—and cast better. Then there was the 6-foot rod for a 3-weight line. It weighed, Vince said, just under an ounce, and it was a real fishing tool, not a toy like the old Leonard "Baby Catskill." We proved this point with long, easy casts under the apple tree.

The tapers appealed to me even more than the

weights. Correct rod tapers, for Marinaro, were not a matter of individual preference: there were specific tasks that the rod had to perform well or it was simply a bad rod. But if you have read *In the Ring of the Rise*, you will know that Vince was uncharacteristically evasive about dimensions. If asked, he would say he did not want anyone making bad rods from his convex tapers, and the other tricks of the trade were as important as the dimensions in thousandths of an inch. I know that he was unhappy because no rod-maker with an adequate milling machine had ever asked him to put rods in production. (Vince used planing forms only because he had no alternative.) He would not sell individual rods because he didn't want to "sell a \$10,000 design for \$1000." It was one subject on which we argued.

I urged him to put what he knew about rod-building in a book, because it was getting to be difficult enough to make bamboo rods that would hold their own against the synthetics, and he should not let the best designs disappear without a ripple. Vince did not write the book, but I still hope that his tapers and notes will be made available to rod-builders.

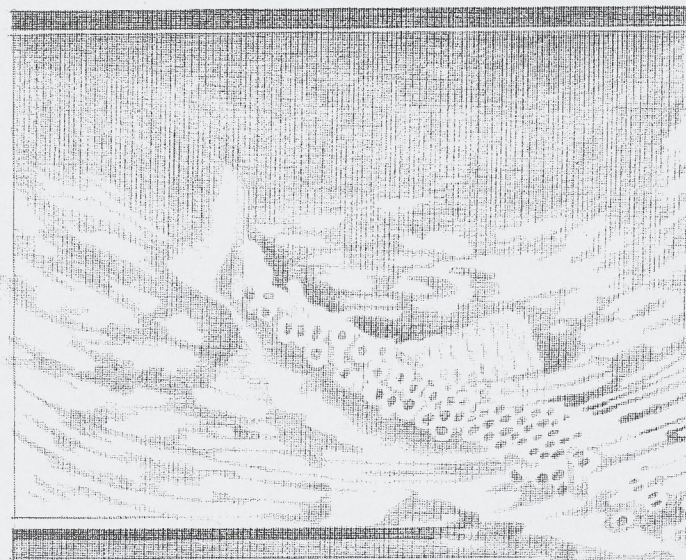
7 LY FISHING HAS BEEN described as an intellectual passion, and there are few people who have proved it more thoroughly than Vince Marinaro. He figured out how to braid horsehair lines, using an authentic gadget he found at a flea market. He reconstructed the old British North Country flies, taking pains to find authentic materials. (Who else had dotterel feathers?) But Vince's passions had nothing to do with price or prestige. I heard him express admiration for a few books, a rooster's cape with silver-colored hackles, some old Hardy silk lines, one or two Partridge hooks, good double-barreled shotguns, a rod by Tom Maxwell, a pair of hackle pliers. "That's the only good pair of hackle pliers I ever saw," he said.

The list of things he did not like was longer but expressed with equal frankness if anyone asked. He held conventional wisdom in such disregard that some interlocutors found him unsettling. In addition to Halfordian flies, he disliked:

- ☐ Many prestigious bamboo rods, especially if they had stiff butts or soft middles.
- ☐ All graphite rods. (He found them lacking in soul, repulsive, "almost slimy" to the touch, and got so that he would not willingly walk into a shop where he had to look at them. But, at an earlier stage, he once admitted that an Orvis 9-foot, 3-inch graphite rod for a 6-weight line cast well. As the years went on, Vince increasingly objected to overwhelming trout with modern technology.)
- ☐ Rivers (or grouse covers) with lots of people on them.
- ☐ Writers who attract crowds by publicizing individual streams. (But for friends who could keep their mouths shut, he was generous in sharing knowledge of the best streams in Pennsylvania.)
- ☐ Most fishing books.

VINCENT C. MARINARO

IN THE RING OF THE RISE



A STARTLING AND PENETRATING LOOK AT TROUT BEHAVIOR
AND RISEFORMS—WITH BRILLIANT
PRACTICAL INSIGHTS INTO APPROACH AND PRESENTATION

Jon Q. Wright

In connection with the latter dislike, Vince once objected when I expressed a high opinion of a well known author and fly tier. Vince had visited the Au Sable River in Michigan with this man and found him “fishing the water” (casting at random rather than to rising fish) at a time when there were visible rises to cover. I didn’t know enough to press the point, but I wondered whether the other angler could see rising trout as well as Marinaro, whose eyesight was keen until the end.

The *Code* made clear what kind of fishing Vince liked best. He was not, however, a dry fly purist. On one of our last trips to the Letort, he experimented with old-fashioned wet flies on little double hooks. I don’t recall seeing him nymph-fishing. One day, though, I was fishing a little beetle upstream and wet, just like a Skues-style nymph, and Vince invited me to try two small Letort fish that had refused his dry fly. He seemed delighted when they took the beetle. I think he enjoyed filing that away as another angling problem solved.

It was easy to know when Vince was *not* pleased. You can be sure that I did not “pollute the water” (his term) with plastic rods when we went fishing together.

AMONG THE OTHER mysteries of life on which I sought his advice was the relationship between women and field sports. He told me that his wife—he called her “Mom”—had gone fishing with him exactly once, early in their marriage. But she never objected when, several evenings a week, he rushed home from the office and out to the Letort. When he returned late at night, she always had a good meal ready for him and any friend he brought along (and to this I can testify). She was “a real fisherman’s wife,” he said; when she died in 1978, he floated lower in the water.

About then I started driving up to Mechanicsburg on Friday evenings, occasionally, and sleeping over so that we could make a start before dawn for the *Tricorythodes* fishing. It’s hard to believe that Vince actually discovered this hatch. Taking the country as a whole, the Tricos must now be the most important mayflies that American anglers have—and we didn’t even know they existed before Marinaro’s article of July 1969 in *Outdoor Life*! It was the angling equivalent of Columbus’s discovery of 1492. If anglers instead of entomologists decided these things, we would change the name of the genus to *Marinarus*.

Vince took pleasure in the Tricos right through his last summer in 1985. In July he showed me an original Trico spinner design that he considered the best ever. He also explained exactly how to fish for trout "gulping" the tiny flies—and why a bamboo rod worked better than anything else for the purpose.

After the hatch we'd go back to 600 East Marble Street for lunch. He would never let me stop at a restaurant. His food was still good, but the Winesap tree hadn't been pruned and windfalls covered the yard. There was still a swath of mowed grass for casting. Inside the house there were paths between piles of waders, long-handled wading nets, fishing bags, rod cases, guns, and fly-tying gear. On the wall was a scone with three unburned candles drooping in the heat: one bending like a rod on the backcast, one near surrender, and one limp. Near this were a Trout Unlimited Limestoner award and a plaque from the Theodore Gordon Flyfishers, for Vince's contribution to the literature. He must have felt good about these, but he'd have been embarrassed if I had mentioned them. It was, however, open season on his fly boxes, and I could prow through them as much as I liked.


Then we'd go scout some streams, desultorily, and some doves, seriously. Vince would shake his head when he saw the traffic jam on the Yellow Breeches. For the last couple of years, he wasn't willing to face that horde of anglers even to fish the white fly, which he considered a better spectacle than the Tricos. He had worked hard to get catch-and-release regulations on some of the limestone spring creeks, but now he preferred to fish elsewhere—without so many trout, perhaps, but also without so many anglers. Besides, he said, he liked to eat a trout now and then.

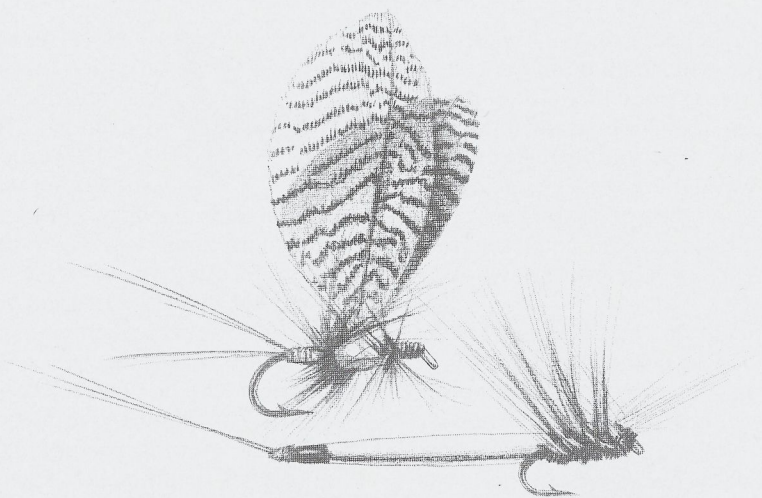
He got more pleasure from the doves. After opening day in September, the hunting would get as crowded as the fishing, but in July the birds still whistled around, a reminder of the times when you could get two cock pheasants in any cornfield and Cedar Run still had trout in it.

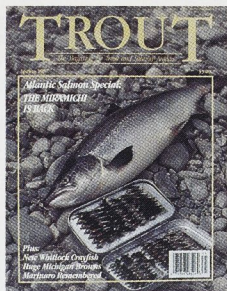
To my knowledge, Vince did not write about hunting, but he liked it as much as fishing; indeed, he seemed to draw no line between the two. By the time I knew him, however, he walked so slowly that my dog found our hunting trips puzzling. I remember creeping through one woodcock covert, full of good smells, while Trooper ran back and forth in front of us, and back and forth, and back and forth. No covert has ever been covered like that one.

On a dove stand, however, legs did not matter much, and Vince was a good shot. The first time we tried it, he uncased a vintage Remington Model 32. It was the first single-triggered double gun I had seen with instant, effective barrel selection—by means of a custom Miller trigger—and it seemed typical of him to have worked out that problem too.

A S WE DROVE DOWN a July road very slowly, Vince shot every dove that crossed—with his forefinger. Any shotgunner would have enjoyed calculating the leads. An incomer would slip by at that peculiar angle which makes doves tricky and Vince would go "bang!" cackling like a nine-year-old slaying dragons. Vince spotted more doves than I did. "Bang!" he'd exult. "You sure missed that one!"

It's my other favorite memory. Vince crossed the last iron bridge on March 2, 1986. The limestone country will remember him for a long time. 





Casts Under The Apple Tree

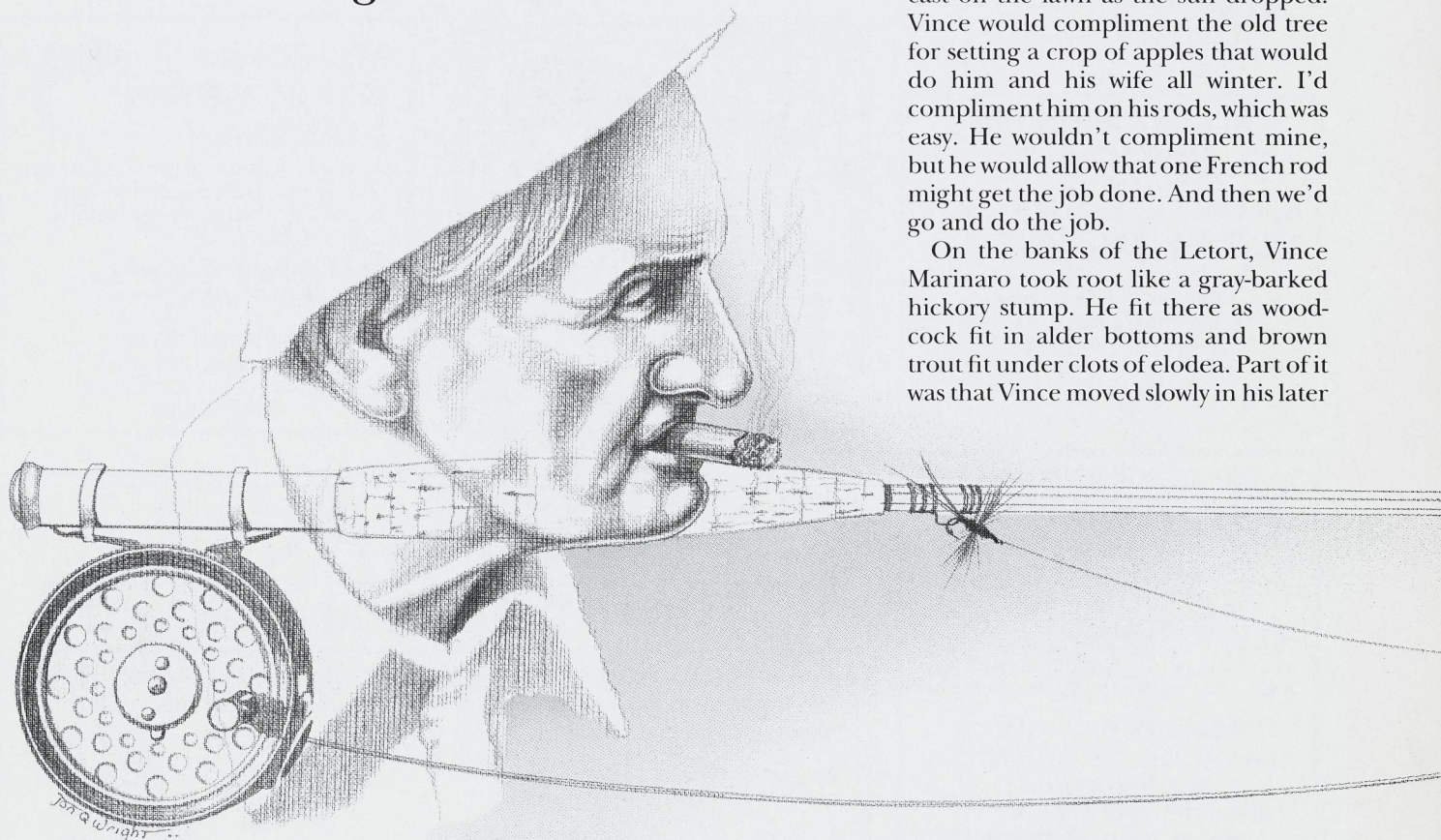
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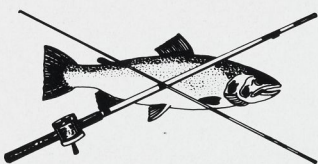
*He is as important a figure
as American angling has
had – he was an American
original.*

Vincent C. Marinaro's house was at 600 East Marble Street in Mechanicsburg, Pennsylvania, but he lived on the banks of the Letort Spring Run. At least, he seemed to live there during the summers I knew him, starting in 1971. If we spent an hour or so in the house before fishing, it was because the tackle was stored there. A big Wine-sap tree shaded the back porch, and Vince's rods had been planed from bamboo strips in that small, screened room. Usually we'd take one of the finished rods, or two or three, out of a battered leather case which, he said, "had been over a lot of iron bridges." I'd hold the screen door open carefully so the tips wouldn't snag. Then we'd cast on the lawn as the sun dropped. Vince would compliment the old tree for setting a crop of apples that would do him and his wife all winter. I'd compliment him on his rods, which was easy. He wouldn't compliment mine, but he would allow that one French rod might get the job done. And then we'd go and do the job.

On the banks of the Letort, Vince Marinaro took root like a gray-barked hickory stump. He fit there as woodcock fit in alder bottoms and brown trout fit under clots of elodea. Part of it was that Vince moved slowly in his later



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years, because of a bad hip. I'd thrash my way through a mile of ragweed without seeing a rise – nothing rises in the Letort while the June sun is still hot – and then I'd thrash back, sneezing, and see Vince planted in the riverbank reeds, rod sticking up like a flowering stem and eyes sharp on the wrinkle of the current where a fish would show when its time came. A cigar would be branching out from the corner of Vince's mouth. Probably he did not actually smell like tobacco and bulrushes and limestone mud and the pollen of every tree in the mid-Atlantic states, but that's the way my memory of him smells.

The sun, after a 32-hour day, would drop behind the trees and give us a few minutes of evening. The sulphur mayflies would float down the stream and Vince would get two or three trout, including the best of the evening, which was likely to be about 16 inches long, a little thin, with a pink sheen along the sides and big black spots: the old Letort strain, which always made Vince happy. In the near-dark, his long, pale rod would flicker a few more times, throwing line back high over the greenery, dropping "puddle casts," and perhaps bowing to another fish as a pair of late mallards whistled up the river.



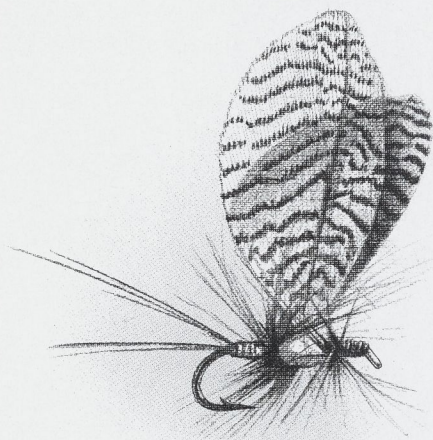
Bernard "Lefty" Kreh

Vince won't be on the Letort's bank again but I haven't a proper obituary in me. He was a private and compartmented person. He liked to talk about what was under a few of the lids and I made no attempt to open the others, which may be one reason we got along. Some scholar will do a lot of research on Vincent Marinaro. He is as important a figure as American angling has had. What I have is a few years of memories that are sharp but disconnected, like film sequences without a script.

Vince did not write two important books just because he happened to be in the right place at the right time, though of course that helped. He did everything well, if he was interested in it, and worked at it until it was perfect. His second book (*In the Ring of the Rise*, New York, Crown, 1976) had pictures of rising brown trout that seemed impossibly good; if you didn't know him, you would have to wonder what tricks he pulled. You might suspect that his photographs were akin to others the outdoor magazines used to run, with

fish performing faked leaps. But Marinaro's pictures were as uncompromising as the man behind the camera. He set up blinds along the banks of the upper Letort and ran countless rolls of film through his old Leica with the reflex housing. The trout were all stream-bred, unconfined, rising to natural insects. The river was open to fishing, so anglers could and did try to catch those fish. If you have tried to *see* Letort trout, let alone photograph them, you will understand the dimensions of the problem.

Vince's reputation, however, had been made by *A Modern Dry Fly Code*, first published in 1950. The worth of a book must be a matter of opinion, but I will not be isolated in suggesting that it was the first great innovative American work in its field. That field is fishing with flies that imitate natural insects. There were, of course, other good fishing books in America by 1950; there were even two excellent ones on imitative flies (by Jennings and Flick). This, however, was a subject on which Vince and I did not agree, as I discovered when he went



through a manuscript of mine in the mid-1970s. Jennings and Flick were honest and sound; they knew their trout and their natural insects and, in my view, both men tied splendid floating flies in the traditional design. Vince, however, had a low opinion of the Halfordian (and Catskill) dry fly. For him there were no good traditional dry flies.

In *A Modern Dry Fly Code* he reproached Skues for not having “emancipated” the dry fly as he did the wet. The Halfordian dry fly was, he thought, no more than a maladapted wet fly – so you can imagine his opinion of Americans who were using it in the mid-20th century. The *Code* provided abundant and clear alternatives. Marinaro had rethought the design of the dry fly from head to tail. It is important, however, to be precise on what he did and did not do. In my view, he proposed more successful new dry-fly designs than any writer in history, by a wide margin. It is fair to say that he did for the dry fly what Skues had done for the wet. At the same time, the *Code* was squarely within the great English-language tradition of fly fishing. It is impossible to think of the book being written in any other language. (This is my opinion – not one that I recall discussing with the author.) As between the English and American schools, he clearly found more guidance in the former. He collected English books, flies, and tying materials. But within the great tradition he was an entrepreneur, not an adapter.

Originality has its costs. Americans were still waiting for the great American novel long after it had been published; the *Code* was similarly ahead of its time. A mutual friend told me the first edition was remaindered in Philadelphia for a dollar a copy. A few years later, before the new edition of 1970,

the 1950 edition was sold for a hundred times the remaindered price – which, of course, did nothing for the author’s bank account but must have made him feel better.

In the time I knew him, Vince was wary of the angling public, and of other authors too. Perhaps the *Code*’s slow reception left a mark on him, but someone who knew him in the ’50s will have to address that.

For me, at least, 1950 was the watershed year in American fly fishing. In the years since, other good books have appeared, and vast (though still very incomplete) work has been done on American trout stream insects. There could have been no better model than Marinaro. He was a lawyer, and the *Code* made good case law: a book that could be argued before the court of anglers for decades without proving flawed. Vince claimed nothing that he had not done, repeatedly. There were no evasive generalities to fail scrutiny. Sources got credit. If you open the book today for the first time, you will have no feeling that you are reading something dated. Everything in it works, and always will.

Perhaps Vince (like Skues) left a list somewhere of the contributions that he considered important. If so, I haven’t seen it and will not attempt a comprehensive list here. But consider some of the innovations in the *Code*.

- Divided tails. (This was an important advance. Divided tails help greatly in persuading a winged fly to land and float in the correct position. As far as I know, Vince was the first who thoroughly understood the role of tails in the dry fly.)
- The “thorax” tie, with hackles wound well back from the eye of the hook and a thorax formed in front of them. (Since 1950, many

other mayfly designs have adopted this principle.)

- An arrangement of hackles designed to make the fly float flat or slightly nose-down on the water, like a real mayfly. (Marinaro's original design is still used but is difficult to tie, and many successors use easier designs.)
- A series of terrestrial flies, including an ant with hackle in the center of the body, a jassid, an innovative grasshopper, and a beetle. (I'm not clear as to precedents for all of these flies, but it is certain that Marinaro played a major role and that his book gave most American anglers the idea of fishing with terrestrials.)

Vince did a lifetime of angling research but did not publish frequently, and most of his occasional articles reappeared as chapters in his second book. I am aware of only three other pieces of published writing: one in *Outdoor Life*, one in the first volume of *Fly Fisherman*, and the foreword to my 1982 book. Perhaps other pieces will turn up. It is clear, though, that everything he did will get attention from historians, so I should say a little more about the foreword. It taught me some things about him.

Most of his contributions had already been made – via the *Code* – before he saw my manuscript on the design of trout flies. Of the 38 designs I listed, three were completely Marinaro and seven others had been heavily influenced by him. Even that count excludes the impact of his V-tail, which improves almost any dry fly.

To my surprise, Vince had little to say about the actual designs I had described or their origins. He must have disagreed on some points (like the usefulness of the traditional dry fly), but not on the

facts. On style he had important, though not detailed, suggestions, "Never give readers more than one thought per page," he counseled. Several times he opined that too much reasoning was packed into a page or a chapter. The chapter he seemed to like best was the first, on the importance of listening to trout. (I later made the other chapters more like the first.)

He clearly liked the idea of assessing a wide range of designs. (He had not done so, nor had he used the term "design," though he was our greatest fly designer. Now, Vince could be counted on for a brutally frank critique, which is all I had sought, but his reaction encouraged me to ask for a foreword. He thought about this for months, and worried aloud. I suppose he knew that a blessing would be important to me,

sponsibility for the book after its publication. When we went fishing, he would give me new ideas and bits of information that he had collected. Our last trip of 1985, he told me of his surprise in finding a 1966 book (by W.H. Lawrie) which used the term "design" and analyzed traditional wet flies in design terms. That discovery gave me a chance to rectify an oversight before my second edition.

I suppose that if he had not chosen to put so much of his intellectual energy into fishing, lawyer Marinaro would have enjoyed being a judge.

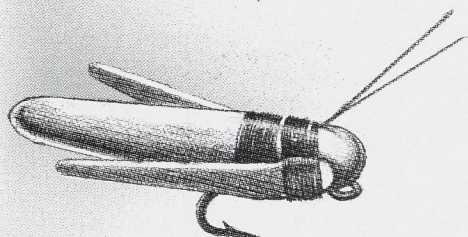
There are a lot of bamboo rods I have not handled, but of those I have, the ones Vince made were the best. They started, at the long end, with a double-handed salmon rod. His personal favorite was a 9-foot, 3-piece, 4-ounce rod

Marinaro found graphite rods lacking in soul, repulsive, almost slimy to the touch. He objected to overwhelming trout with technology.

though we did not discuss that. What he said was that he had been asked to read a number of manuscripts over the years and had announced a policy of no forewords. If he did one now, he would make other authors unhappy. (It was perhaps the only time I heard him express concern about stepping on toes.) But he said he'd think about it, and when he decided to go ahead, he did so with a generosity that was also typical.

He seemed to feel a continuing re-

for a 6-weight line. (He was unable to wade much because of his hip, so he wanted a long rod to clear the bank foliage.) My favorites were the 8- and 7½ footers, which weighed about two-thirds as much as my own rods – and cast better. Then there was the 6-foot rod for a 3-weight line. It weighed, Vince said, just under an ounce, and it was a real fishing tool, not a toy like the old Leonard "Baby Catskill." We proved this point with long, easy casts under the apple tree.



The tapers appealed to me even more than the weights. Correct rod tapers, for Marinaro, were not a matter of individual preference: there were specific tasks that the rod had to perform well or it was simply a bad rod. But if you have read *In the Ring of the Rise*, you will know that Vince was uncharacteristically evasive about dimensions. If asked, he would say he did not want anyone making bad rods from his convex tapers, and the other tricks of the trade were as important as the dimensions in thousandths of an inch. I knew that he was unhappy because no rodmaker with an adequate milling machine had ever asked him to put rods in production. (Vince used planing forms only because he had no alternative.) He would not sell individual rods because he didn't want to "sell a \$10,000 design for \$1,000." It was one subject on which we argued.

I urged him to put what he knew about rod-building in a book because it was getting to be difficult enough to make bamboo rods that would hold their own against the synthetics, and he should not let the best designs disappear without a ripple. Vince did not write the book, but I still hope that his tapers and notes will be made available to rod-builders.

Fly fishing has been described as an intellectual passion, and there are few people who have proved it more thoroughly than Vince Marinaro. He figured out how to braid horsehair lines, using an authentic gadget he found at a flea market. He reconstructed the old British North Country flies, taking pains to find authentic materials. (Who else had dotterel feathers?) But Vince's passions had nothing to do with price or prestige. I heard him express admiration for a few books, a rooster's cape with silver-colored hackles, some old Hardy silk lines, one or two Partridge hooks,

good double-barreled shotguns, a rod by Tom Maxwell, a pair of hackle pliers. "That's the only good pair of hackle pliers I ever saw," he said.

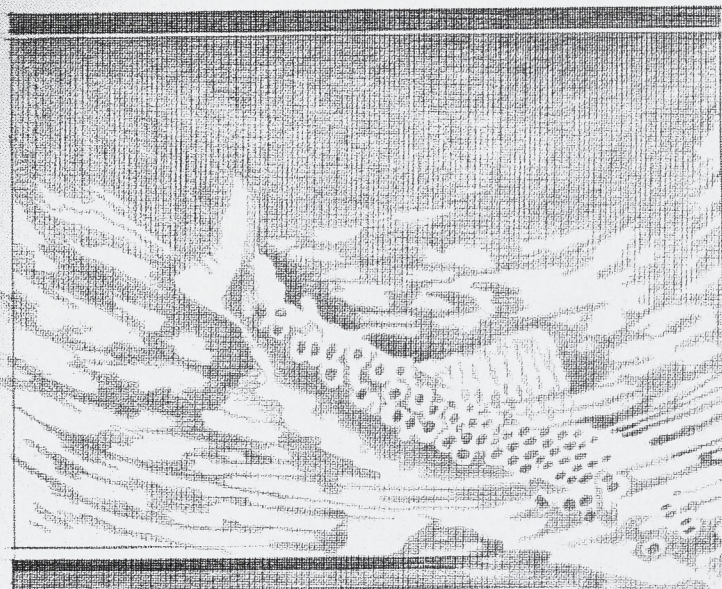
The list of things he did not like was longer but expressed with equal frankness if anyone asked. He held conventional wisdom in such disregard that some interlocutors found him unsettling. In addition to Halfordian flies, he disliked:

- Many prestigious bamboo rods, especially if they had stiff butts or soft middles.
- All graphite rods. (He found them lacking in soul, repulsive, "almost slimy" to touch, and got so that he would not willingly walk into a shop where he had to look at them. But, at an earlier stage, he once admitted that an Orvis 9-foot, 3-inch graphite rod for a 6-weight line cast well. As the years went on, Vince increasingly objected to overwhelming trout with modern technology.)
- Rivers (or grouse coverts) with lots of people on them.
- Writers who attract crowds by publicizing individual streams. (But for friends who could keep their mouths shut, he was generous in sharing knowledge of the best streams in Pennsylvania.)
- Most fishing books.

In connection with the latter dislike, Vince once objected when I expressed a high opinion of a well known author and fly tier. Vince had visited the Au Sable River in Michigan with this man and found him "fishing the water" (casting at random rather than to rising fish) at a time when there were visible rises to cover. I didn't know enough to press the point, but I wondered whether the other angler could see rising trout as well as Marinaro,

VINCENT C. MARINARO

IN THE RING OF THE RISE



A STARTLING AND PENETRATING LOOK AT TROUT BEHAVIOR
AND RISEFORMS—WITH BRILLIANT
PRACTICAL INSIGHTS INTO APPROACH AND PRESENTATION

Jon Q Wright

whose eyesight was keen until the end.

The *Code* made clear what kind of fishing Vince liked best. He was not, however, a dry fly purist. On one of our last trips to the Letort, he experimented with old-fashioned wet flies on little double hooks. I don't recall seeing him nymph-fishing. One day, though, I was fishing a little beetle upstream and wet, just like a Skues-style nymph, and Vince invited me to try two small Letort fish that had refused his dry fly. He seemed delighted when they took the beetle. I think he enjoyed filing that away as another angling problem solved.

It was easy to know when Vince was not pleased. You can be sure that I did

not "pollute the water" (his term) with plastic rods when we went fishing together.

Among the other mysteries of life on which I sought his advice was the relationship between women and the field sports. He told me that his wife — he called her "Mom" — had gone fishing with him exactly once, early in their marriage. But she never objected when, several evenings a week, he rushed home from the office and out to the Letort. When he returned late at night, she always had a good meal ready for him and any friend he brought along (and to this I can testify). She was "a real fisherman's wife," he said; when she

died in 1978, he floated lower in the water.

About then I started driving up to Mechanicsburg on Friday evenings, occasionally, and sleeping over so that we could make a start before dawn for the *Tricorythodes* fishing. It's hard to believe that Vince virtually discovered this hatch. Taking the country as a whole, the Tricos must now be the most important mayflies that American anglers have — and we didn't even know they existed before Marinaro's article of July 1969 in *Outdoor Life*! It was the angling equivalent of Columbus's discovery of 1492. If anglers instead of entomologists decided these things, we

would change the name of the genus to *Marinarus*.

Vince took pleasure in the Tricos right through his last summer in 1985. In July he showed me an original Trico spinner design that he considered the best ever. He also explained exactly how to fish for trout "gulping" the tiny flies – and why a bamboo rod worked better than anything else for the purpose.

After the hatch we'd go back to 600 East Marble Street for lunch. He would never let me stop at a restaurant. His food was still good, but the winesap tree hadn't been pruned and windfalls covered the yard. There was still a swath of mowed grass for casting. Inside the house there were paths between piles of waders, long-handled wading nets, fishing bags, rod cases, guns, and fly-tying gear. On the wall was a scone with three unburned candles drooping in the heat; one bending like a rod on the backcast, one near surrender, and one limp. Near this were a Trout Unlimited Limestoner award and a plaque from the Theodore Gordon Flyfishers, for Vince's contribution to the literature. He must have felt good about these, but he'd have been embarrassed if I had mentioned them. It was, however, open season on his fly boxes, and I could prowl through them as much as I liked.

Then we'd go scout some streams, desultorily, and some doves, seriously. Vince would shake his head when he saw the traffic jam on the Yellow Breeches. For the last couple of years, he wasn't willing to face that horde of anglers even to fish the white fly, which he considered a better spectacle than the Tricos. He had worked hard to get catch-and-release regulations on some of the limestone spring creeks, but now he preferred to fish elsewhere – without so many trout, perhaps, but also

without so many anglers. Besides, he said, he liked to eat a trout now and then.

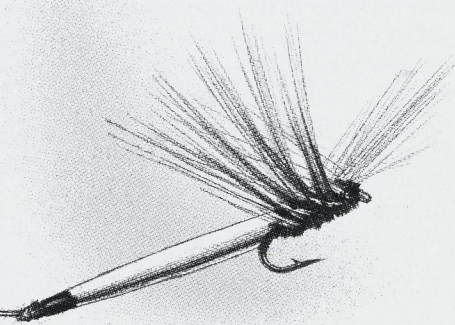
He got more pleasure from the doves. After opening day in September, the hunting would get as crowded as the fishing, but in July the birds still whistled around, a reminder of the times when you could get two cock pheasants in any cornfield and Cedar Run still had trout in it.

To my knowledge, Vince did not write about hunting, but he liked it as much as fishing; indeed, he seemed to draw no line between the two. By the time I knew him, however, he walked so slowly that my dog found our hunting trips puzzling. I remember creeping through one woodcock covert, full of good smells, while Trooper ran back and forth in front of us, and back and forth, and back and forth. No covert has ever been covered like that one.

On a dove stand, however, legs did not matter much, and Vince was a good shot. The first time we tried it, he uncased a vintage Remington Model 32. It was the first single-triggered double gun I had seen with instant, effective barrel selection – by means of a custom Miller trigger – and it seemed typical of him to have worked out that problem too.

As we drove down a July road very slowly, Vince shot every dove that crossed – with his forefinger. Any shot-gunner would have enjoyed calculating the leads. An incomer would slip by at that peculiar angle which makes doves tricky and Vince would go "bang!" crackling like a nine-year-old slaying dragons. Vince spotted more doves than I did. "Bang!" he'd exult. "You sure missed that one!"

It's my other favorite memory. Vince crossed the last iron bridge on March 2, 1986. The limestone country will remember him for a long time.



About 1925 words

Note that this
is an intro to a
lyric book

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Introduction

A Modern Dry Fly Code opened a half-century during which anglers would proliferate, equip themselves amply, and absorb great blocks of Vincent Marinaro's original thinking into conventional wisdom. And yet after all that, his work still seems innovative. You read it today and find that life is just catching up.

In 1950, when the first edition was published, American fly-fishing remained intensely (because unwittingly) provincial. Every dry fly for trout sold by a major mail-order firm¹ still followed Frederic Halford's 1886 British designs. Patterns with names like Iron Blue, Blue Dun, and Cowdung imitated insects that do not exist in America. There was one unlikely caddisfly in the catalogue and one possible stonefly. There were no spent spinners, no terrestrial imitations, no hooks smaller than size 14, and not a single fly likely to deceive a trout in the Letort Spring Run.

1. The Orvis catalogue, 1959 -- nine years after Marinaro's first edition.

It was not that American anglers made a point of copying British flies. We had, on the contrary, lost track of whom we were copying. We were taking the advice of writers who had borrowed from other writers and so on back to 1886, when somebody read Halford. We were working from copies of copies of copies, and the product had lost its relation to nature -- American or British. Halford's original Iron Blue Dun might have worked on the Letort, if only because it was small, but an Iron Blue on a size 14 Mustad hook (equivalent to a Redditch 12) would have put down rising brown trout in chalk stream and spring creek alike.

At core, the problem was that fishing authorities, with honorable exceptions, were dispensing revealed wisdom -- advice uncluttered by sources. It was an old habit among writers on both sides of the Atlantic, and I mention it here because Vince Marinaro raised the subject with me. He had acknowledged his own debts and was not amused when his personal contributions were later borrowed without attribution.

Vince returned to original sources, natural and human. He collected local stream insects, had them identified by entomologists, and rethought the artificial fly from head to tail. Earlier American writers were of little help in this work because none had understood the limestone spring creeks. Marinaro referred to predecessors "like Hewitt and La Branche and Gill" as "legendary."

In British books, however, Vince found what he needed -- not

on specific insects but on methods. He opened the Code with a quotation from Col. E.W. Harding, then drew from Skues, Halford, Mottram, Dunne, Ronalds, and more. Finding the right sources must have taken research, for an American in the 1940s.

A Modern Dry Code was not the first American work on flies that imitate natural insects. Jennings and Flick had both published before 1950; both knew Catskill trout and mayflies¹; and both (in my opinion) tied excellent dry flies in the traditional design. This, however, was a subject on which Vince did not agree, as I learned when he went through a manuscript of my first book. The Halfordian (and Catskill) dry fly was, for him, merely a wet fly adapted to float -- a purpose for which the design was not suited. With this background you will understand Marinaro's meaning when, in the pages that follow, he regrets that G.E.M. Skues did not "emancipate" the floating fly as he did the wet.

* * * * *

Marinaro (unlike Skues) left no list of angling contributions. Lest we forget, consider some innovations in the Code.

1. Terrestrial flies. This book gave land-based insects their myth -- and some of their best designs. There is a floating

1. Note for British readers: A mayfly, to anglers in America (and scientists everywhere) is any member of the order Ephemeroptera.

ant with hackle in the center of the body, a brilliant jassid, ingenious beetles, and a grasshopper unlike any other.

2. Minutae. Americans often need smaller flies than British anglers, but we did not know that till the Code taught us.

3. Widespread tail. Marinaro was, I think, first to describe "the enormous mechanical advantages to be gained by a proper arrangement of tail fibres" in the dry fly. A divided tail helps in persuading a winged fly to land and float in the correct position. This idea (with variations in the method of tying) has been widely adopted since 1950.

4. The "thorax" fly. Hackles are wound well back from the eye of the hook -- an idea for which the author gave credit to Edgar Burke -- and designed to make the fly float flat or slightly nose-down on the water, like a real mayfly. Marinaro's original design is still used, though it is not easy to tie. Many successors use other approaches to the same end.

5. Olives. Marinaro may have been first to recognize the importance of mayflies in the genus Baetis on American waters. (In 1969, he would also alert anglers to the genus Tricorythodes. Taken together, olives and tricos now furnish more than half of my fishing with imitative flies.)

In all of the above, what matters is not the author's specific patterns or tying methods, which can be altered to suit each individual fly-tyer. What matters is discovery.

There was yet another discovery, if one uses the term in a sense made popular by European explorers of new lands. Marinaro

put limestone spring creeks on the American angler's map. It required a "brand of fly-fishing ... never observed or exploited before my time," he writes. He must have worked out the chalk-stream method by reading, for he would not fish the River Itchen till years later.

There are spring creeks west of the Great Plains which are, today, in better condition than either the Pennsylvania limestoners or the English chalk streams. There are tailwater fisheries that provide the same kind of fishing, and more of it, without sources in springs. The American fly-fishing boom of recent years has focused on such fertile streams. In them we catch rising fish, or try to catch them, by matching the hatch. It involves stalking a visible quarry, rather than waiting for something mysterious to happen in the depths. The people who are drawn to fly-fishing in the first place are often especially drawn to this particular kind -- but we were not aware of that, before 1950.

* * * * *

Few people have proved more thoroughly than Vincent Marinaro that fly-fishing is an intellectual passion. He taught himself to make horsehair lines, using an authentic gadget found at a flea market. He reconstructed the old British North-Country flies, taking pains to find authentic materials. (Who else had dotterel feathers?)

His passions had nothing to do with price or prestige. I heard him express admiration for a few books, a cock's cape with

silver-colored hackles, some old Hardy silk lines, one or two Partridge hooks, good double-barreled shotguns, a rod by Tom Maxwell, and a pair of hackle pliers. "That's the only good pair of hackle pliers I ever saw," he said.

The list of things he did not like was longer but expressed with equal frankness, if one asked. He held conventional wisdom in such disregard that some interlocutors found him unsettling. In addition to Halfordian dry flies, he had no time for:

- Rivers (or grouse coverts) with lots of people in them.
- Writers who attract crowds by publicizing individual streams.
- Anglers who fail to respect their prey. "Fishing is a blood sport," he said, and certain obligations come with it.
- Some prestigious bamboo rods, especially if they had stiff butts or soft middles.
- All graphite rods. He found them lacking in soul, repulsive, "almost slimy," and got so that he would not willingly walk into a shop where he had to look at them. (But, at an earlier stage, he once admitted that an Orvis 9'3" graphite rod for a 6-weight line cast well.)

It was easy to know when Vince was not pleased, and as the years went on, he increasingly objected to overwhelming trout with modern technology. You may be sure that I did not "pollute the water" (his term) with plastic rods when we went fishing

together.

He insisted on "treating the stream right," but that did not mean putting all fish back. He liked a trout dinner, especially when it was cooked by his wife.

Once when I mentioned a well-known American author in conversation, Vince shook his head and said that he had seen the man "fishing the water" (casting at random) at a time when there were visible rises to cover. I did not know enough to press the point, but I wondered whether the other angler could see rising trout as well as Marinaro -- whose eyesight was keen long after his legs gave out.

He was, however, not a dry-fly purist. On one of our last trips to the Letort, he experimented with old-fashioned wet flies on small double hooks. I don't recall seeing him nymph-fishing. One day, though, I was fishing a little herl-bodied beetle upstream and wet, just like a Skues-style nymph, and Vince invited me to try two small Letort fish that had refused his dry fly. He seemed delighted when they took the beetle. I think he enjoyed filing that away as another angling problem solved.

* * * * *

Marinaro made his own rods of split cane, starting with a double-handed salmon rod that seemed impossibly light. His personal favorite was a 9-foot, 3-piece, 4-ounce rod for a 6-weight line. (His bad hip made wading difficult, and the long rod kept backcasts above foliage on the bank.) My favorites were the 8- and 7 1/2-footers, which had about two-thirds the weight of my

own rods -- and cast better. Then there was the 6-foot rod for a 3-weight line. It weighed, Vince said, just under an ounce, and it was a real fishing tool, not a toy like the old Leonard "Baby Catskill." We proved this point with long, easy casts under the old apple tree in his back yard.

The rods' tapers were, for him, not a matter of individual preference: There were specific tasks that had to be performed well or the rod was simply bad. But he was uncharacteristically evasive on the particulars. If asked, he would say that he did not want anyone making bad rods from his convex tapers, and the other tricks of the trade were as important as the dimensions in thousandths of an inch. He had hoped that some rod-maker with a milling machine would ask him to put rods in production. (He used planing forms only because he had no alternative.) He would not sell individual rods because he didn't want "to sell a \$10,000 design for \$1,000."

I urged Vince to put what he knew about rod-building in a book, because it was difficult enough to make bamboo rods that would hold their own against the synthetics, and he should not let the best designs disappear without a ripple. He did not write the book, but I still hope that his tapers and notes will be made available to rod-builders.

* * * * *

For me, the watershed in American fly-fishing came with 1950 and the Code. In the years since, other good books have appeared and vast (but still incomplete) work has been done on American

trout-stream insects. There could have been no better model than Marinaro. He was a lawyer, and the Code made case law that would be argued before the court of anglers without proving flawed. Vince claimed nothing that he had not done. There were no evasive generalities to fail examination. Precedents were identified. If you open the book today for the first time, you will not feel that you are reading something obsolete. Everything in it works, and always will.



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"Some of the best fishing is done not in water but in print."
SPARSE GREY HACKLE

Datus Proper
1085 Hamilton Road
Belgrade, Montana 59714
USA

28 June 1994

Dear Datus

Marinaro

Today I received your Introduction. Thank you for a brilliant and informative evaluation, which will be ideal to those readers unfamiliar with Marinaro's important work. Congratulations, and what a relief to have some well-written text!

For FCL's additional work in support of the book it would be helpful for me to receive from you a summary CV. Also, given your interest, your choice of USA magazine(s) that might have interest in your text (in addition to our normal policy of sending review copies)? We will be producing catalogue material for this Autumn in preparation for 1995 publication of the book.

You have sympathetically extended and communicated Marinaro's work with great sensibility - I'm sure he would have been very approving and grateful.

With best wishes

Yours sincerely

greeting, Justin.

Justin Knowles

cc. Nick Lyons

From: Peter Knapp



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"Some of the best fishing is done not in water but in print."
SPARSE GREY HACKLE

P.S. Sorry for the illegible writing!

25 May 94

Dear Datus a quick note to thank you

for your words on the Maximaco promised
interview. I'm delighted. Thank you.

At this time, there is no
length limit: we will work around it. I'm keen to
get a photograph of him for the frontispiece? Will
say he might have access, but do you? maybe
a photocat for starters?

I'm just off to Tweed for

fishing: like Jeremy Fisher 'with rod and long

hops'; although not much of a frog in this

Rain! But we are having, although encouraging for the fish.
Perhaps you could write me a note on your estimated length and

DARTMOOR VIEW, MARY STREET, BOVEY TRACEY, NEWTON ABBOT, DEVON, TQ13 9HQ, ENGLAND, UK.

time, approximately.

TELEPHONE: UK (0)626 834182; FAX: UK (0)626 835714.

In haste, Peter

June 17, 1994

Mr. Justin Knowles
The Flyfisher's Classic Library
Dartmoor View, Mary St.
Bovey Tracey, Devon
TQ13 9HQ, England

Dear Justin,

A copy of this is going to Nick Lyons. Would like his opinion, if he has time to give one.

Note that I worked from the second edition -- the only one I have. Assume you'll be using the same one.

I bumped into one change that should perhaps be made to this third edition. Please see last ¶ p.24, in which the author writes that "the olive is very scarce in America." This must have been his opinion in 1950 (first edition). On p.123, however there is more accurate information that must have been added for the 1970 (second) edition. I have suggested in the intro that the olive is one of Marinaro's most important discoveries. Do you want to consider a deletion on p. 123 now? Over to Nick.

Yours,

Enclosed: Introduction to Marinaro

cc. Nick Lyons

The limestone streams had been fished in an old wet-fly style that he describes as "a burlesque thing" in such water. Theodore Gordon did not understand the similarities between spring creek and chalk stream, but then Gordon had never been to England. Edward R. Hewitt did not understand either, and he had fished the chalk streams.

Marinaro understood. He had grown up in the "raw mountain country of western Pennsylvania" and learned to catch brook trout in rocky, infertile streams, then moved to the "rich, weedy" limestone waters in the south-central part of the state. He found them "full of insect and fish life" -- as different as if they had been on another continent.

Vince never fished the western spring creeks. He would not fly, and there were no trains to this part of Montana.

There were, however, still ships going to Britain, and he boarded one late in life, perhaps without realizing how difficult it could be to get fishing on the chalk streams. As Vince told the story, Roy Darlington saved the trip with an invitation to the Abbots Barton water on the River Itchen. It was G.E.M. Skues' old beat.

Mind you, originality had its costs. Readers were waiting for the great American novel decades after it had been published, and the Code was similarly ahead of its time in 1950. A few years later, first editions changed hands for a hundred times the price at which they had been sold off -- which must have made Vince Marinaro feel better. By the time we began to fish together in

1971, the book had gone to a successful second edition.

that their temperatures fluctuate in a narrow range, relative to that of streams fed directly by rain or snow-melt.

(1)Note for British readers: A mayfly, to anglers in America and scientists everywhere, is any member of the order Ephemeroptera.

(2)Outdoor Life, July 1969.

Marinaro set out to emancipate the dry-fly, and he did it. He did not use the term "design," but he was our most original fly-designer. He has by now influenced fly-fishermen world-wide, whether or not they have read his writing.

There had been other good American writers, but none had grasped British precedents well enough to build on them. It was not till the mid-twentieth century that we got our first angling book that did not have to start by re-inventing the wheel. It sprang from the streams of the limestone country.

It is fair to say that he did for the floating fly what Skues had done for the wet.

Marinaro got their information right, even to calling olives by their correct name. There are may olives (small mayflies of the genus Baetis) in America. There are no blue-winged olives, though the name has been borrowed and widely used. Avoiding such pitfalls could not have been easy for a writer who, at that time, had not visited England.

[He must have made the connection between limestone and chalk by reading, because he did not visit England till much later.]

Taking America as a whole, east to west, mayflies in the genus Tricorythodes are the most important we have -- and almost no one knew they existed till Marinaro wrote about them in 1969.² It was the angling equivalent of Columbus's landfall in 1492.

are chemically similar, and the chemistry provides high fertility. Equally important, they are stenothermal -- meaning

May 18, 1994

Mr. Justin Knowles
The Flyfisher's Classic Library
Dartmoor View, Mary St.
Bovey Tracey, Devon
TQ13 9HQ, England

Dear Justin,

Thanks for your invitation. I'll start the introduction to Marinaro instanter. Do you have a length-limit? If so, please let me know (soon if not instanter) because this one needs more than the standard formula, and Vince would expect me to get it right. He was original. Most readers, even (or especially) on this side of the Atlantic, have not figured out what he was up to, but he changed the direction of our sport.

You should hop over here and try the fishing, if you haven't already. Or even if you have.

Yours,



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"Some of the best fishing is done not in water but in print."
SPARSE GREY HACKLE

3rd May 1994

Datus Proper,
1085 Hamilton Road,
Belgrade MT 59714,
U.S.A.

Dear Datus Proper,

A MODERN DRY-FLY CODE: VINCENT C. MARINARO

You will have heard from Nick Lyons that we are planning to republish a special edition for this classic title. For most of our titles we endeavour to incorporate a new introduction, and Nick suggested that you would be the ideal person as "the single best authority on Marinaro"; also I understand that you extensively fished with him.

I enclose one of our catalogues and you will note that we sell relatively small editions, to a high specification for our Members; we do not sell to bookshops. I anticipate the edition will probably be limited to around 750 copies. As we are a small independent Publishers, we are unable to offer a substantial fee, but many of our writers prefer to receive their choice of books from our list, in exchange for their text. Perhaps you would let me know your thoughts about this.

Incidentally, we would plan the book for 1995 and would hope to receive the text of introduction for early Autumn 1994, as we would hope to incorporate reference to the text in our 1995 catalogue.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,

JUSTIN KNOWLES.