PART 2 – PREFACE

Maine has a special place in the hearts of those who collect American fishing tackle, especially collectors interested in early bamboo fly rods and fly reels. The Pine Tree State has been home to many of the most famous makers of some of the earliest, high quality rods and reels. Among the most famous are Hiram L. Leonard and Fred E. Thomas, both of whom were located for part of their careers in Bangor, Maine. Leonard was also a skilled gun maker, especially active making guns during his early years in Bangor, prior to relocating to the Central Valley, New York.

While still in Bangor, Leonard employed a number of skilled fishing reel inventors and makers, including Frank Philbrook and Edward Payne. Less widely known was Charles E. Wheeler of Farmington who made high quality bamboo rods, as well as fish landing nets and guns. In Auburn, Maine, there was James B. Daniels who, when not guiding anglers and hunters, made bamboo rods for trolling as well as fly casting.

The lives and products of these, and other early Maine rod makers, have been documented in numerous magazine articles, and in a few books. The most comprehensive work is *Maine Made Guns & Their Makers*, authored by Dwight B. Demeritt, Jr. This book was first issued in 1973, with a revised and enlarged edition published by the Friends of the Maine State Museum 24 years later. *Classic & Antique Fly-Fishing Tackle*, written by A. J. Campbell and published in 1997 by Lyons & Burford of New York, covers many of the same manufacturers as did Demeritt’s books, but contains more specific information about fly-fishing tackle. Most recently,

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the life, works, and colleagues of Fred E. Thomas have been chronicled in *F. E. Thomas: The Man & His Rods*, a 466-page book authored by Robert D. Stewart and Jerry Girard, and published in 2015.

While the history of early fishing rod (and gun) manufacturing in Maine is reasonably well documented, the story of the early making of fishing lures in Maine has not been told. Hence, the purpose of this book is to review the late nineteenth and early twentieth century history of lure making in Maine. In addition to information about the lives of the early lure makers, their businesses and products, this book includes information about early Maine-made flies as three of the lure manufacturers featured in this book also produced hand-made fishing flies. In this book, an “early lure manufacturer” is someone born before 1911 who made all, or a significant part, of their living in Maine by making fishing lures and other fishing tackle. While this book focuses on seven manufacturers (five born before 1900) and their closest business associates (usually family members), information is also provided about a few other early lures and their Maine makers.

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This book would not have been possible without the help of others. Some individuals helped by showing me their collections of Maine lures; others shared their ideas about lures and their makers; still other individuals helped me find lures; and many shared lures, advertisements, tackle catalogs, and other materials used in this book. Each of the following individuals helped in unique ways, and I thank each for their assistance: Craig Brown; Arlan D. Carter; Paul C. Cote; Dwight B. Demerit, Jr.; David C. Fuller; Gerald Girard; Joel C. Gushee; Michael R. Hamilton; James P. Hanlon; Graydon R. Hilyard; Jeffrey Knapp; Daniel Leroux; Lloyd L. Lindholm; Harold F. Porter (who interviewed R. M. Applegarth and C. H. Hamilton); Carlton D. Pratt; Robert Stewart; and Peter R. Stowell. Ronald D. Goddard and Daniel Leroux not only shared their extensive collections of Maine lures with me, but helped to clarify my thinking about many of these lures and their makers. James R. Murray shared photographs of, and shared information about, his family’s multi-generational fishing tackles businesses. Frederic A. and Steven E. Peterson, and the Hamilton family (Michael R., Scott R, and Dolores P.), provided articles, catalogs, and other items related to their two families’ fishing tackle businesses. Nancy D. McReynolds graciously provided me with copies of materials, including family photographs, related to H. O. Stanley; and Lorne Hirsch provided me useful details about Stanley’s personal fishing tackle. The Bangor Public Library, Dixfield Historical Society, Maine State Library, Maine State Museum, McArthur Public Library (Biddeford, Maine), and the Raymond H. Fogler

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Library (University of Maine, Orono) provided me access to materials under their stewardship.

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