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History of Maine's Early Fishing Lures and Their Makers

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The History of Maine's Early Fishing Lures and Their Makers



by William B. Krohn

Cover Photograph. – A hand-made, wood tackle box discovered by the author. When found, this box contained a Lake Auburn Trolling Spoon made by Charles H. Morse, Auburn, Maine; a double-bladed Rangeley Spinner made by the Murray Bait Co., Auburn, Maine; and 3 Six-Ball Swivels made by Bill Burgess, Minot, Maine. Other fishing tackle made by Morse, the Murray brothers, and Burgess have been added to this box to demonstrate the variety of fishing lures made by these skilled craftsmen. Photograph by Ellen Conant Krohn.

Dedication



Photograph courtesy of the Maine State Museum.

Above Photograph.— Henry O. Stanley (on the right) during a fishing trip to western Maine in the early 1900s. Today, Stanley’s personal fishing tackle is still relatively intact and is owned by a private collector. Included in this collection are three items shown above: Stanley’s Vom Hofe tackle box (made in Brooklyn, New York), his Daniels bamboo trolling rod (Auburn, Maine), and the Philbrook and Payne reel (Bangor, Maine). Stanley was one of Maine’s earliest makers of fishing lures and a long-time Commissioner of Inland Fisheries and Game for the State of Maine (see Stanley Chapter in this book). Two of the four fishing lures invented by Stanley were so successful that they continued to be made. Stanley’s friend and fishing partner (on the left) was Theodore L. Page who, in addition to owning the Mooselookmeguntic House (building in the background), was proprietor of the Senate Cafe in Washington, D.C.

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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,

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 provide about a few other early lures and their Maine makers.

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

Comments on all or parts of this book, when in manuscript form, were provided by Ron Goddard, Mike Hamilton, Ellen Krohn, Dan Leroux, and Jim Murray.

INTRODUCTION

Nineteenth century Maine was a coveted destination for city dwellers from the eastern U.S.A., and even for some as far away as Europe, wanting to fish, hunt, or simply explore Nature. By the end of the Civil War, Maine had a reasonably well developed transportation system that included steamships for coastal travel; steamboats on lakes and rivers; railroads and stagecoaches to take travelers inland; and buckboards, canoes, and horses for back-woods adventures.

The annual influx of anglers and hunters, called “sports” by Maine natives, created a demand for a variety of services. In addition to transportation, hotels and sporting camps, guiding services, and taxidermy businesses appeared on Maine’s coast and inland. Areas such as the Belgrade Lakes, Grand Lake Stream, Moosehead Lake, Rangeley Lakes, Sebago Lake, and northern Maine where waterways provided good access to the back country. With the sports came a demand for goods to support these outdoor excursions. Mainers adapted quickly and small businesses sprung-up throughout the state with people making a wide variety of sporting goods, including canoes, camping gear, boats, oars and paddles, snowshoes, knives, gun, rods, fishing nets, and fishing flies and lures.

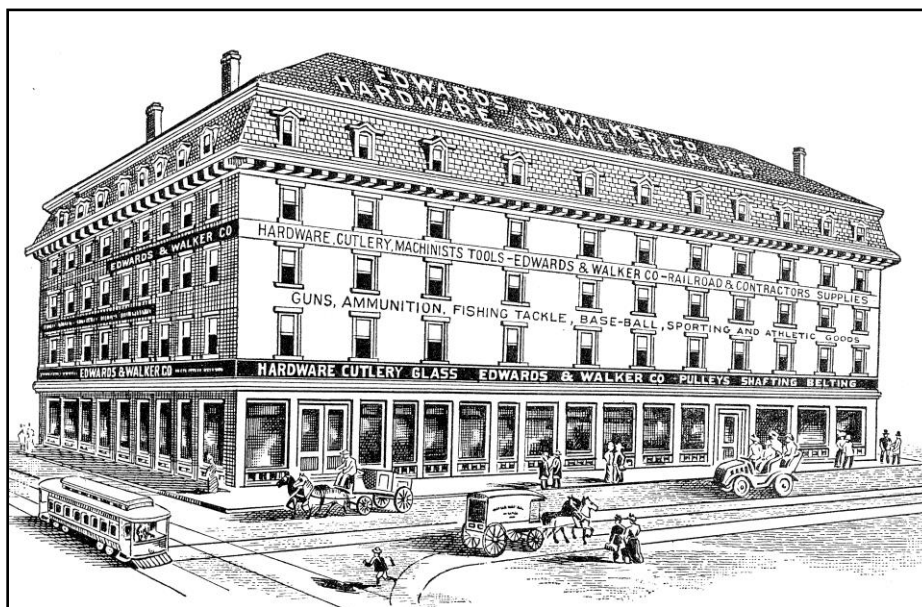
Most of the businesses that provided goods and services for outdoor activities employed only a few people and were frequently operated out of the owner’s home. The number of “cottage businesses” during this time will never be known, but their effect on Maine’s economy, especially in rural areas, was real. To sell the outdoor goods made by these cottage businesses, the number of sporting good dealers and fishing tackle sellers increased rapidly in 19th century

Maine. The rapid growth of the sporting goods industry – specifically fishing tackle – can be seen in these two these lists from the *Maine Business Directory* of 1874 (left) and 1890 (right):

Fishing Tackle.	
(See also Hardware and Cutlery.)	
Piper Joseph & Son, 130 Water,	Augusta
RAMSDELL J. W. 3 East end	
Kenduskeag bridge (see adv.	
dept. p. 62),	Bangor
RAMSELL & NEAL, 2 Har-	
low (see adv. dept. p. 61),	"
Leonard H. L. 2½ West end	"
Kenduskeag bridge,	"
Wheeler Charles E.	Farmington
Nason C. F., Main street,	Lewiston
BAILEY GILBERT L. 48 Ex-	
change (see advt. p. 6, front),	Portland
DAVIS T. B., Temple, cor. Fed-	
eral (see adv. dept. p. 1),	"
ROWE W.	Skowhegan

Fishing Tackle.	
(See also Hardware and Cutlery.)	
Emerton J. B., Main st.	Auburn
Dickey Wm. P. & Co. 38 West	
Market sq.	Bangor
Holt & Morrill, 34 State.	"
JENNESS THOS. & SON, 12	
West Market sq. (see advt.	"
opp. Iron Founders),	"
Neal John H. 1 Harlow.	"
RICE & MILLER, 47 West	
Market sq. (see advt. inside	"
front cover),	"
Smith W. H. & Son, 184 Front,	Bath
Follett F. A., Church st.	Belfast
Wiley G. R.	Bethel
Bean S. E. 10 Alfred,	Biddeford
Cleaves Charles J. 223 Main,	"
Stevens F. E.	Bridgton
Ward H. E. (flies),	Caribou
Stanley H. O. (fly and leader	
manufs.)	Dixfield
Goodhue J. W.	Fort Fairfield
Bailey F. E.	Foxcroft
Hathaway Henry J.	Houlton
Littlefield John B. 14 Main,	Lewiston
Smith C. M. (rod manufs.),	Norway
Bailey Gilbert L. 263 Middle,	
cor. Temple,	Portland
Davis T. B. 178 Middle,	"
Buck David, 101 Main,	Saco
Richardson O. B.	Strong

With a growing number of retailers across Maine, wholesale dealers in sporting goods soon followed, with the center of Maine's sporting goods business becoming Portland. In the late 1890s, Maine's largest city was home to three large wholesale/retail sporting goods dealers. Edwards & Walker Company, established in 1876, was located on Monument Square (from front cover of Edwards & Walker Catalog [~1908]):



Author's collection.

With a few blocks there was the T. B. Davis Arms Company (see photograph of store online at Maine Memory Network) established two years before Edwards & Walker, and the retail store of John P. Lovell Arms Company. Lovell, a Boston company formed in 1840, first came to Maine in 1894. Lovell had a factory in South Portland and retail stores in Bangor and Portland, Maine. their Portland store was at 180-182 Middle Street (from *Portland Past and Present* [1899: 181]):



Author's collection.

In 1900, J. P. Lovell Company became a subsidiary of Iver Johnson Arms & Cycles Works. Iver Johnson, headquartered in Boston, continued to maintain a Maine presence until the business ceased in the late 1920s. In 1908, yet another large Maine wholesaler/retailer selling sporting goods was incorporated, Rice & Miller Company. Located in Bangor, Maine, Rice & Miller carried an extensive line of fishing tackle. Rice and Miller continued in business well into the 20th century, after the Portland businesses ceased operating.

Following are eight chapters, seven of which are devoted to the major Maine lure makers born on or before 1910. A major maker is one who made four or more type of metal fishing lures. The eighth chapter covers those makers who made only one lure (e.g., Lucerne Lure), or

was a major early distributor of fishing tackle made by others (i.e., T. B. Davis Arms Co.).

The businesses that are the main focus of this book operated, collectively, from approximately 1880 to the late 1960s. Almost all of Maine's fishing lure makers stamped their metal products, indicating the pride these took in their work. These skilled men and women wanted the public to know, and remember, the makers. Three of the seven majors made and sold flies well before venturing into lures. These were H. O. Stanley, F. E. Bailey, and Bill Burgess. Only two major makers, Bailey and Burgess, made lure manufacturing their main means of financial support during their adult lives. For the other makers, lure manufacturing only supplemented their incomes. Interestingly, the early Maine lure makers were not evenly distributed across Maine. Henry O. Stanley operated his business from the western Maine town of Dixfield, where he was a life-long resident. Stanley was the earliest of the major makers, first making flies and leaders circa 1880. In later years, Stanley also invented, made, and sold four metal fishing lures. Fred E. Bailey was the next oldest maker, initially producing high quality flies. Bailey lived his entire life in Dover and Foxcroft, Maine. In 1922, these two central Maine towns were administratively joined into one town, Dover-Foxcroft. This historical detail becomes important because collectors can use this year to date, when the fly or lure is fixed to a card labeled with the town where made, to estimate the general time when a Bailey produce was made. Bailey later added lures to his inventory, eventually making four types, three lures which were original to him. Bailey and his successors were in business longer than any of the other five major makers, from 1884 until 1948. The last five major makers were all located in southern Maine. Charles H.

Morse, the Murray brothers, and H & J Fishing Tackle operated in Auburn, Maine, whereas William H. “Bill” Burgess worked from his home in Poland and from a shop in nearby Minot Corner, and Lee (a.k.a. Abenaki) Spinner Company was located in South Berwick, Maine. I have no explanation as to why the Auburn/Minot area had a concentration of early lure makers. Perhaps it was Auburn’s long-time tradition as a center of shoe making and textile manufacturing that developed a core of people familiar with machines and manufacturing.

Before presenting a brief overview of each of the major manufacturers, I wish to note that many of the fishing lures invented and made in Maine were named for lakes, especially lakes in the Rangeley Region of western Maine. In addition to the Cupsuptic and Rangeley spinners invented and first made by H. O. Stanley, there was the Rangeley Lake Troll, Richardson Lake, Bill’s South-Arm [of Richardson Lake], and Bill’s Umbagog [Lake]. Bill Burgess conceived and produced the preceding three spinners, along with the North Twin [Lake] and Pennessseewassee [Lake]. The Lake Auburn, which was first made by Charles Morse around the turn-of-the century, was yet another early Maine spinner. The Moosehead [Lake] Troller invented and made by Fred Bailey of Dover-Foxcroft, Maine. Clayton Hamilton, founded H & J Fishing Tackle and invented and manufactured both the Belgrade [Lakes] Spinner and the Sebago [Lake] Twins – a double-bladed spinner. Franklin W. Hobbs of Bangor, while not a major maker, did patent and produce the Lucerne [Lake] Lure in the late 1920s. Then there is a Sebago Spinner produced in the 1930-40s by at least three makers, including T. B. Davis. This spinner was simply a Stanley-Lowe Cupsuptic Spinner given another name. Finally, there is the Mooselook Wobbler,

named for Mooselookmeguntic Lake in western Maine. This lure, which is still widely used, was invented in the late 1930s by John A. Selinki. Originally from Maine, Selinki changed his last name to Greene and in 1938 formed the J. A. Greene Company in Massachusetts to make the Mooselook Wobbler. Originally produced in Sutton, Massachusetts, today the Mooselook Wobbler is made by Brecks Inc. in Quebec, Canada.

Now for brief overviews of the major Maine makers. Charles H. Morse, who apparently worked alone, made and sold the Lake Auburn Trolling Spoon. His spoons were made in at least three shapes. Another southern Maine maker, William H. “Bill” Burgess produced flies as well as a greater variety of lures than any other Maine maker. The Murray brothers of Auburn produced fishing spinners and weights, as well as sold tackle made by others. Richard W. Murray and John L. Murray continued the tradition of Charles H. Morse and made a high quality copper trolling spoon similar to Morse’s. One of the new lures the brothers made was Murray’s Aluminum Minnow, invented and patented by their father. The Murray brothers later transferred the rights to the Minnow to a manufacturer in Massachusetts, and in late-1960s J. Lee Murray Company ceased operations in Auburn (although Murray lures continued to be made elsewhere). H & J, the third Auburn-based maker, was founded and operated by Clayton H. Hamilton. Hamilton was a skilled sheet metal worker and roofer by trade and an avid angler by avocation; his lure making business combined these two interests. Finally, Leroy “Roy” M. Applegarth, a tool and die maker, owned Lee (a.k.a. Abenaki) Spinner Company for about a decade in the 1950s. Applegarth operated his lure business from his residence in South Berwick, Maine.

Burgess, the Murray brothers, Hamilton, and Applegarth continued the traditions of Morse by making high quality trolling spoons in a variety of sizes similar to the Lake Auburn. Lures made by these businesses, however, clearly moved Maine's lure manufacturing from a hand-made, one-at-a-time process, to a mass production, machine-process. The use of machines to cut and shape spoons and spinner blades resulted in the per unit cost of lures being significantly reduced. The end result of this mass production to the collector is that Morse and Burgess spoons and spinners, in general, are harder to find than those made by the most recent makers, especially J. Lee Murray, Clayton H. Hamilton, and Roy M. Applegarth (see Price and Rarity).

While men founded each business chronicled in this book, we must not forget the key roles that women played in the history of Maine lure making. We know that Stanley and Burgess both hired women to tie flies, cut and assemble leaders and lures, and inventory and ship products. Burgess employed a neighbor's 19 year year-old step-daughter as a "fish tackle forewoman" to supervise the local women he employed. Fred Bailey's wife, as well as Gardner Percy's wife, worked in their husbands' businesses. Mrs. Percy was a skilled maker of fishing flies tying flies at their Portland home when the business was first starting. Mrs. Bailey, along with her daughter-in-law, even ran the Bailey business for seven years after Fred died.

In general, Maine lure makers did not avail themselves to the power of advertising in national sporting journals like *The American Angler* and *Forest and Stream*. While Henry O. Stanley did run an ad about the Stanley Aluminum Smelt in the spring and summer of 1895 in *Forest and Stream*, he made no sustained national advertising effort. A lack of national advertising was also

true for the other Maine makers. Instead of advertising nationally, those Maine lure makers that did advertise used Maine-based publications. For example, Stanley ran ads in *Carleton's Pathfinder and Gazetteer of Hunting and Fishing Resorts of the State of Maine* (1899) (Stanley and Carleton were friends, having worked together as fisheries commissioners for the State of Maine) as well as the *Maine Sportsman* (1909, 1910). Bailey occasionally ran advertisement promoting his flies and lures, and almost always used periodicals associated with his home-base of Dover-Foxcroft (examples shown in the Bailey chapter). Stanley, Burgess, and the Murray brothers each had tackle catalogs printed, but based on their rarity today, never in large runs. Advertisements of lures made by Stanley, Bailey, Burgess did appear in T. B. Davis catalogs as well as other wholesalers, but never on a regular and sustained basis. From a national perspective, Maine-made fishing lures were never extensively promoted making these lures little known among today's collectors.

Perhaps in part due to a lack of national promotion, only five pieces of terminal fishing tackle invented in Maine gained national reputations among American lure collectors. Two of these pieces were spring hooks, or fish traps, among the first patented and made in America. These were Dunlap's Spring Hook invented by Ephraim L. Dunlap of Eustis, Maine; and the Old Glory Sure Catch Fish and Animal Trap, patented by Jacob Cartier of Biddeford, Maine. The other Three pieces of terminal tackle that gained national reputations among American collectors were the Stanley Aluminum Smelt, and the Cupsuptic and Rangeley spinners. These three lures were invented and initially manufactured by Henry O. Stanley. Stanley was not only Maine's first

maker of more than one type of metal fishing lure, but he also was the State's only lure maker who's fishing spinners were produced nationally by many manufacturers, including almost all of the early makers from his home state. The Cupsuptic and Rangeley spinners remained highly popular among anglers even after Stanley's death as can be seen in this 1930 list of fishing lures recommended by the Maine Development Commission (an agency devoted to promoting Maine tourism):

BAITS, FLIES, and LURES <i>for Maine Waters</i>	
Salmon For early fishing as soon as the ice leaves and for the following week or two	Smelt on Single Hooks Archer Spinners with smelt Cupsuptic Baits with smelt Phantoms Rangeley Spinners with smelt Nature Baits
Salmon Flies These flies have a long shank hook and a bunch of worms is used with the fly They are fished as wet flies; no bait, when fly fishing only is permitted	Maine Lake Trolling Flies Parmachenee Belle Silver Doctor Durham Ranger Jock Scott Dusty Miller Thunder & Lightning Mitchell
Salmon Baits For later fishing	Cupsuptic Baits with worms Rangeley Spinners with worms Other similar bait which law permits
Trout Baits For early fishing Trout will take worms more readily than salmon	Smelt on Single Hook Archer Spinner Cupsuptic Baits with worms Phantoms Rangeley Spinner with worms

Author's collection.

To give the reader an overview of Maine's major makers of fishing lures, the years of the makers' birth and death, their main business associates, and the years they were in business are summarized below. The major makers are ordered by their birth years (in bold below):

<u>Tackle Maker</u>			<u>Business</u>	
	<u>Born</u>	<u>Died</u>	<u>started</u>	<u>ended</u>
Henry O. Stanley	1829	1913		

H. O. Stanley Sporting Goods			1880	1897
H. O. Stanley & Son (George P.)	1869	1955	1898	1913
Frank Stanley	1848	1935	1913	~ 1915
Fred E. Bailey	1854	1940		
flies			1884	1940
flies and trolling lures			1899	1940
F. E. Bailey & Son (Carl R.)	1881	1943	1930	1912
Mary A. Bailey	1880	1948		
flies and trolling lures			1940	1948
Charles H. Morse	1869	1931	~1900 ^a	1927
William H. "Bill" Burgess	1886	1967		
State-O-Maine Tackle			1922	~ 1945
Murray Bait Company			1935 ^b	1943
Richard William Murray	1897	1969		
John Lee Murray	1899	1963		
J. Lee Murray Company			~1947	~1967 ^c
John Lee Murray	1899	1963		
Harold G. Parker	1898	1973		
H & J Fishing Tackle				
Clayton H. Hamilton	1901	1994	~1947	~1965
Lee (a.k.a. Abenaki) Spinner Company				
Leroy "Roy" M. Applegarth	1910	2000	1948 ^d	1960 ^d

^a – Morse could have started making his Lake Auburn trolling spoon in the late 1890s, but no conclusive evidence for this was found. He was first listed as a "guide" in the 1914 *Auburn Business Directory*, having ended his career as a minor league ball player.

^b – William Murry (occasionally spelled without an "a"), father of Richard and L. John Murray, received a patent for the Murray Aluminum Minnow on June 21, 1910. However, the Murray brothers are not listed as lure makers in *Manning's Auburn Business Directory* until 1935.

^c – After the J. Lee Murray Company ceased its Auburn operations in 1967-68, different ownership moved the company to Lisbon Falls, Maine, and later to Arundel, Maine.

^d – The author's collection has a Lee Spinner Company display card dated "9/13/48/." The ending year may have been a few years earlier, based on an interview of company owner Roy M. Applegarth conducted in the late 1980s by Harold F. Porter.

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Anonymous. ~1908. *Edwards & Walker Company – Fine Fishing Tackle and Baseball Goods, Guns, Rifles and Ammunition*. Portland, Maine (publisher unstated). [This catalog includes five pages of color illustrations of fishing lures. Page 64 is the Kosmic Spinner – similar to a Rangeley – and pages 65 & 66 cover Rangeley spinners, including advertisements by P. W. Edwards Company of Portland, Maine. H. O. Stanley transferred his rights to Edwards who manufactured it for only a few years before he died in 1909.].

Anonymous. ~ 1910. *T. B. Davis Arms Co. – Fishing Tackle. Catalog No. 41*. Portland, Maine (publisher unstated). [Right half of page 79 dedicated to three lures made H. O. Stanley & Son.].

Anonymous. 1919. *General Catalog of Rice & Miller Company*. Wynkoop Hallenbeck Crawford Company, New York. [Fishing tackle is included on pages 444-488].

Anonymous. ~1927. *T. B. Davis Arms Co. – Jobbers of Fine Fishing Tackle. Catalog No. 45*. Portland, Maine (publisher not give). [The first 66 pages of this 76-page catalog are about fishing tackle; page 54 has a chart of Morse's Lake Auburn Spoons; and page 55 is devoted to Rangeley spinners.].

Anonymous. 1929. *Edwards & Walker Company – Sporting Goods, Cutlery, and Sportsmen's Specialties*. Portland, Maine (publisher unstated). [The first 97 pages of this 237 page catalog are devoted to fishing tackle; a few Bill Burgess spinners included in this catalog.].

Anonymous. ~1930. *T. B. Davis Arms Co. – Jobbers of Fine Fishing Tackle. Catalog No. 46 (?)*. Portland, Maine (publisher unstated). [The first 77 pages of this 88 page catalog are devoted to fishing tackle; many Bill Burgess lures are illustrated in this catalog.].

Anonymous. ~1930. *Edwards & Walker Company – Sporting Goods, Cutlery, and Sportsmen's Specialties*. Portland, Maine (publisher unstated). [The first 87 pages of this 210 page catalog are devoted to fishing tackle; a few Bill Burgess spinners included in this catalog.].

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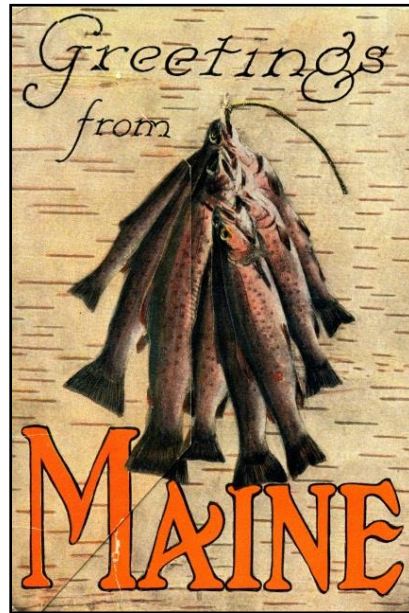
Lyons & Burford Publishers, New York. [Page 244 discusses the history of the J. P. Lovell Company and its relationship to the Iver Johnson Company].

Demeritt, Dwight B., Jr. 1997. *Maine Made Guns & Their Makers*. Friends of the Maine State Museum, Augusta, Maine. [This book documents that many of Maine's early gunsmiths also pioneered the development of fly-fishing tackle. This is an enlarged, revised revision of the same title published in 1973].

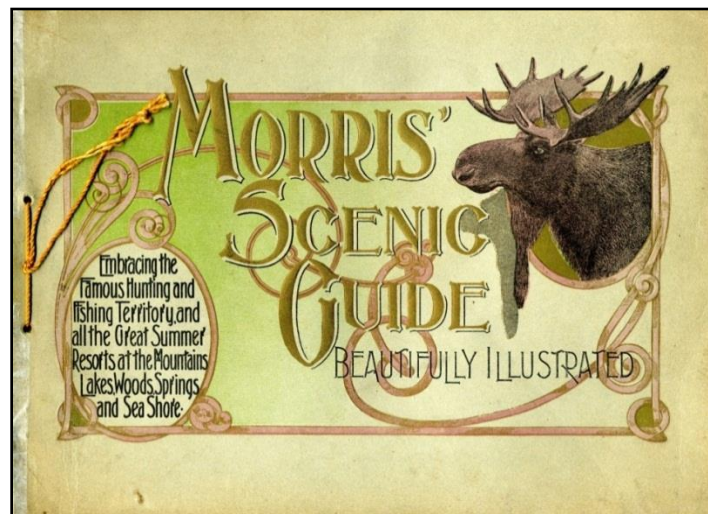
Gillespie, C. Bancroft (compiler). 1899. *Portland Past and Present – Issued Under the Endorsement of the Portland Board of Trade and City Government*. Evening Express Publishing Company, Portland, Maine. [Pages 180-183 featured the Lovell Arms Company, including a photograph of Lovell's Portland store and an illustration of their factory in South Portland].

Stewart, Robert D., and Jerry Girard. 2015. *F. E. Thomas: The Man & His Rods*. The Two Curmudgeon Press, Bend, Oregon. [The definitive work about Fred E. Thomas, his business, colleagues, times, and bamboo fishing rods].

A Gallery of Illustrations Related to Late 19th and Early 20th Century Fishing in Maine



Author's collection.



Author's collection.

A folder of post cards from the early 1920s (upper left) and a brochure from 1930 (upper right) along with a booklet of photographs from the early 1900s (lower illustration) promoting outdoor tourism in Maine. Publications such as these, published by the State of Maine and railroad companies, extolled the availability of exceptional fishing and hunting in Maine.



Author's collection.

An illustration from F. M. Johnson's *Forest, Lake, and River: The Fishes of New England & Eastern Canada* (1902, vol. 2, p. 328). The trout, salmon, bass, and pickerel inhabiting New England waters readily strike the types of spinners and lure (i.e., an artificial minnow, bottom of the drawing) shown here. Thus, these baits have been manufactured and fished throughout the region. For example, the Rangeley Spinner the upper right of this illustration was invented by Henry O. Stanley of Dixfield, Maine in the 1880s. Stanley continued making this spinner until he gave up his rights to the lure in 1906-07.



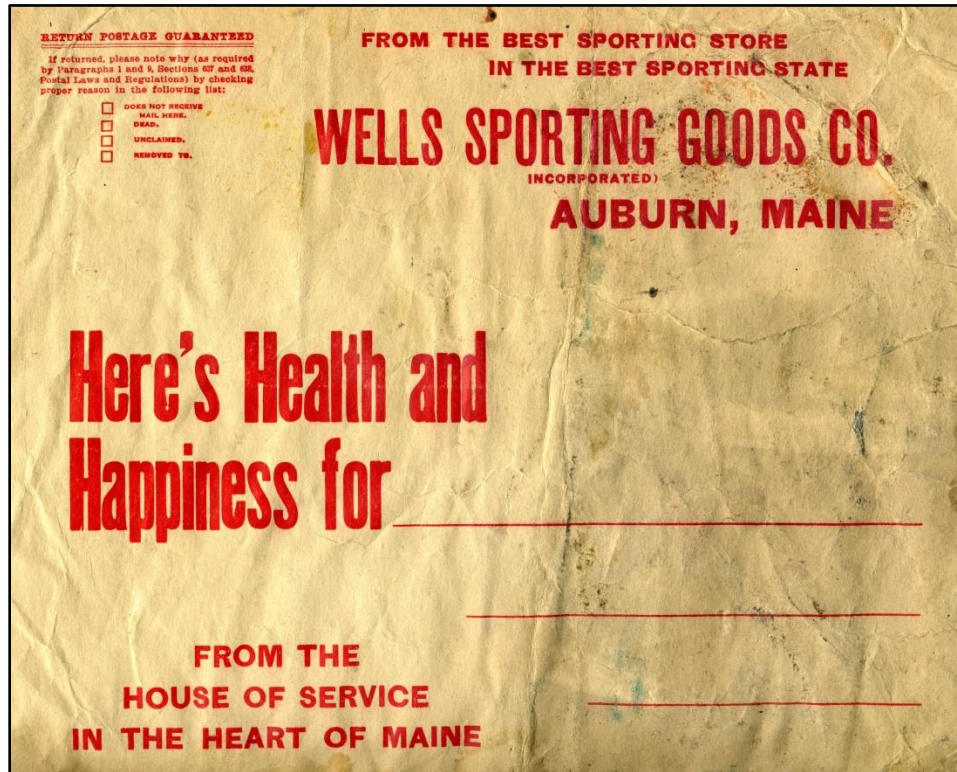
Author's collection.

Two anglers, and their guide (holding the bow of the Rangeley boat), unload their catch at Billy Soule's camp on Pleasant Island in Cupsuptic Lake, western Maine. Trolling with baits and lures, using the kind of rods and reels shown above, was a popular fishing method in Maine, especially on lakes and ponds during spring and fall. (Note the heavy overcoats, and lack of leaves on the tress in the background; probably spring). This photograph is from *The Woods of Maine* series taken by Edwin R. Starbird, Brunswick, Maine.



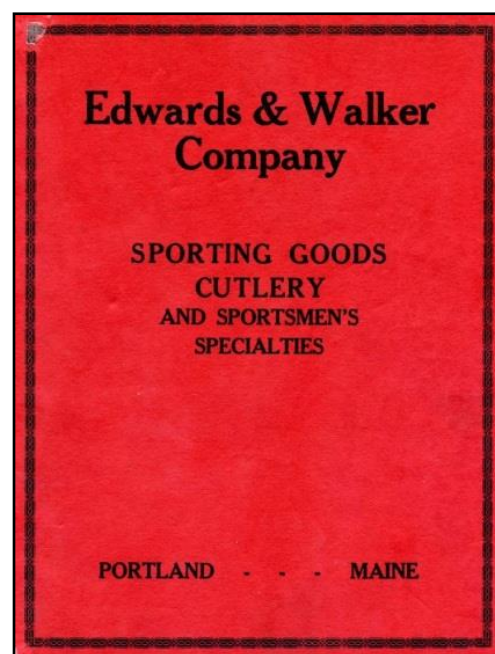
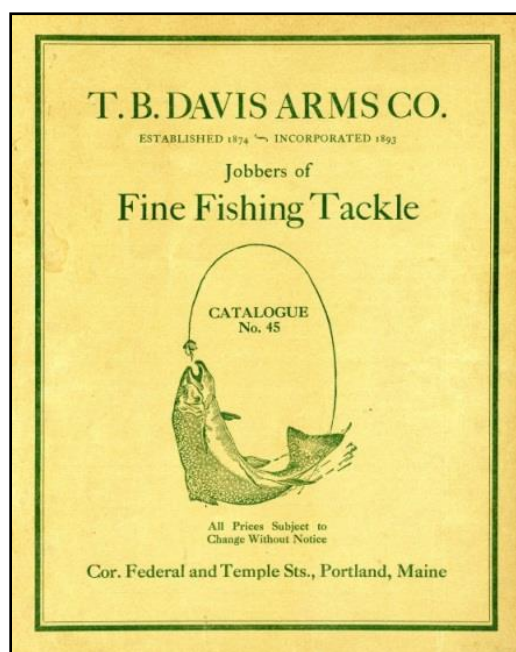
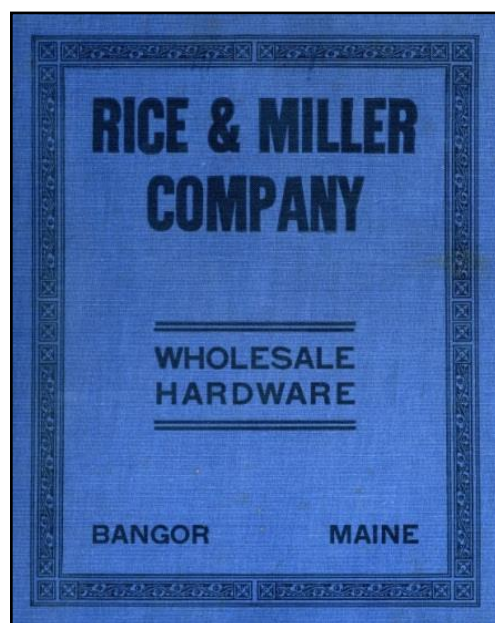
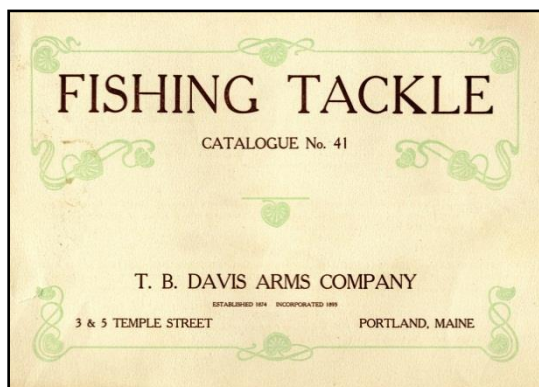
Author's collection.

The kind of catch that New England anglers dreams about. Most of the above fish are land-locked salmon (with spots across the top of their back). The bright fish in the foreground (and in the upper right corner) is a large brook trout. Both salmon and trout can be readily caught on spinners and spoons, the primary type of fishing lure produced in Maine during the late 1800s through early 1900s. This photograph is from *The Woods of Maine* series taken by Edwin R. Starbird, Brunswick, Maine.



Author's collection.

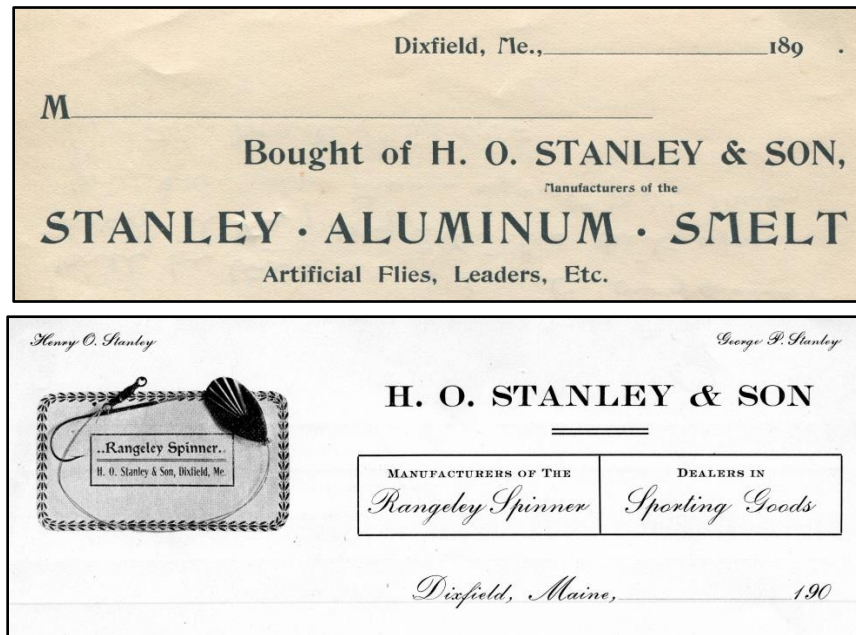
A mailing envelope (12 ¼ X 9 ¼ inch) used in the early 1940s by the Wells Sporting Goods Company, Auburn, Maine. The Company's motto, "Here's Health and Happiness," was similar to the one later used by H & J Tackle, "Happy Fishing & Joyous Results." Wells Sporting Goods sold fishing lures made by Henry O. Stanley (based on a 1911 newspaper ad) and the Murray brothers (a Murray Bait Co. spinner was found in this envelope). Because the Wells Sporting Goods was located in Auburn, and existed from around the turn-of-the century until 1943-44, it likely sold the products of the other fishing lure makers in southern Maine, namely C. H. Morse (Lake Auburn Spinners) and Bill Burgess (State-Of-Maine Tackle). Wells Sporting Goods Company, however, predated both H & J Fishing Tackle and the Lee Spinner Company.



Author's collection.

Trade catalogs, such as the ones shown above, are a useful source of information about early fishing tackle and their makers (although not all makers sold their tackle through the large dealers). In many instances, trade catalogs are undated leaving the users to have to estimate dates based on prices and types of lures being offered. With a large enough series of catalogues, however, reasonable estimates of publication years can be made. Approximated publication dates on the above catalogs, from top left to bottom right are as follows: ~1910, 1919 (so listed in Catalog), ~1927, and ~1936.

HENRY O. STANLEY (1829-1913): From Fire to Flies and Fishing Lures Dixfield, Maine



Letterheads courtesy of the Dixfield Historical Society (top) and Nancy McReynolds (bottom).

Henry Orville Stanley is better known to collectors of early American fishing lures than any other Maine maker. Because one of the lures he invented and produced, the Stanley Aluminum Smelt, is clearly marked, available, and hence widely collected. Also well known to collectors, but unmarked and hence problematic to identify, is Stanley's Rangeley Spinner. In addition to inventing and producing these two fishing lures, Stanley also originated and made the State of Maine and Cupsuptic spinners. The former is not stamped and very rare, and while the latter is stamped, it's rare and comes in two types. Because this spinner was made for Stanley by W. T. J. Lowe, the Stanley Cupsuptic Spinner has both Lowe and Stanley markings that requires some

specialized knowledge to identify (see Gallery of Photographs below).

Stanley served as Maine Inland Fisheries and Game Commissioner from 1872 until his retirement in 1905 (except 1880). During his 33 years of service to the State of Maine, he was appointed by 13 Governors, a remarkable achievement by any standard. While this job was considered prestigious by many, Stanley's state salary was modest. To supplement his income, he owned and operated a number of businesses, including a general store, a grist mill, a wool processing factory, and a sporting goods and fishing tackle business. While Stanley sold sporting goods and a variety of other goods in his Dixfield general store in 1866 (and probably even earlier), he did not start making flies and lures on any scale until 1880. In that year, while at Moosehead Lake assisting with the construction of a fish hatchery, both his grist mill and wool processing factory caught fire and suffered severe damage. Stanley's insurance had tragically expired the previous day. This same year, due to political reasons, he had not been re-appointed as Commissioner and was working for the state only on a contract basis. Apparently lacking enough funds to rebuild his factory and mill, necessity forced Stanley to start a smaller enterprise, the manufacturing of flies and lures. For 15 years he initially focused on flies and leaders, making a variety of trout, salmon, and bass flies. In 1895, George P. Stanley joined the business to form H. O. Stanley & Son (see above letterheads). In 1907, George went into the toothpick business (in the later 1800s, Dixfield was a national center for the manufacturing of toothpicks) and around this time Stanley & Son transferred the rights to the Rangeley Spinner to Phillip W. Edwards of Portland, Maine. After Stanley & Son ceased making Rangeley Spinners,

their most profitable product, they over-saw the manufacturing of the Cupsuptic Spinners. H. O. Stanley & Son at this time was known as the Cupsuptic Spinner Company even though their spinner was manufactured by William T. J. Lowe in Buffalo, New York. When Stanley died in 1913, George stopped his involvement in the tackle business and Henry's younger brother, Frank, continued selling Cupsuptic Spinners. After a few years Frank Stanley ceased making the Cupsuptic Spinner and William T. J. Lowe and his successors, Enterprise Manufacturing Company (better known as Pflueger), continued making this popular spinner with only Lowe markings.

Henry O. Stanley was born in Dixfield, Maine on March 22, 1829. He was the first of seven children to be born to Isaac N. Stanley (1804-1881) and Susan Trask (1894-1901). Isaac and Susan were married in Dixfield on February 24, 1828, where he was a businessman and land surveyor. Henry was educated in local schools, and roamed the fields and forests around Dixfield. When a teenager, Henry enjoyed shooting the now extinct passenger pigeon, and as an adult was an avid red fox hunter. Life was not all play and the young Henry also helped his family and relatives with their work. When only 10 years old, Henry accompanied his father to the Rangeley Lakes on a fall fishing trip where they caught and preserved spawning brook trout for the family's winter food. At age 15, Henry accompanied his uncle, Major Siles Barnard, on a forestland survey around Bemis, Maine. These early trips were the start of Stanley's life-long association with the Rangeley Lakes of western Maine.

In April 1851, in addition to working in family businesses, Henry was appointed as a Major to

serve as the Aid-de-Camp (i.e., personal assistant) to Major General John B. Marrow of Dixfield. Marrow was the senior officer for the Sixth Division of the Maine Volunteer Militia. In October 1852, Stanley left Maine for the California gold fields. Two years later, after finding enough gold to make a modest living, but never “striking it rich,” he returned to New York and made his way back to Maine. During his two years in California Stanley was accompanied by his first cousin, Charles W. Eustis. In 1856, Eustis and Stanley formed a partnership to operate a general store on the corner of Main and Church streets in Dixfield. Stanley bought out Eustis in 1866 and ran the store until 1885, when he started his sporting goods and fishing tackle business.

In 1857, Henry married Helen Randall Sawtelle. Helen died in 1861 when only 29 years old. The couple had no children. Three years after Helen’s death Henry married Mary Elizabeth Bennett of Gorham, New Hampshire. Henry and Mary had two children, Nellie Louise (1865-1953) and George Page (1868-1955). George’s middle name came from Henry’s cousin and close friend, George Shepard Page (1838-1892), who fished with Henry and financially supported his early hatchery work in the Rangeley Lakes Region. (George S. Page’s brother, Theodore L. Page, is shown in the photograph on page iii).

Stanley was elected to the Maine Legislature in 1871 and served one year. The next year he, along with Elias M. Stillwell of Bangor, Maine, was appointed by Gov. Sidney Perham as Fisheries Commissioners for the State of Maine (in later years these positions became Fish and Game Commissioners). Stanley was appointed 11 times, serving continuously, except for 1879-80, until January 24, 1905. In 1879-80, Stilwell contracted with Stanley to continue his

conservation work with the Commission. While Stilwell focused on maintaining passage for Atlantic salmon and other sea-run fishes on Maine's rivers and streams, Stanley worked to develop fish culture methods and established a system of fish hatcheries for inland fishes. Both commissioners worked to improve Maine's fish and game laws and Maine was recognized a number of times by Theodore Roosevelt for his progressive conservation work.

In 1880, Stanley's grist mill and carding works burnt down. He had no insurance, but nevertheless started the H. O. Stanley fishing flies and leader business, located on Weld Street in Dixfield. The next year was the second year in a row of tragedies for Stanley. His father died on July 28, 1881. In August of this year his beloved wife, Mary E. Stanley, died in a Portland hospital while waiting for an operation to remove a tumor. Mary was only 39 years old, and Henry never re-married.

For Stanley, life was not all tragedies. Around 1885, the East Oxford Angling Association was formed, with Stanley as Vice President. They built a lodge on Weld Pond (now known as Webb Lake) on the southwest shore. After the association ceased operating Henry purchased the lodge, simply naming it "Stanley Camp." This camp became a retreat where Henry frequently went to fish, and enjoyed time with his two children and three grandchildren.

In January 1905, Stanley retired as Commissioner. His health had been failing, and after more than three decades of dedicated work for the State of Maine, it was time to pass his conservation work onto a younger generation. He spent his retirement enjoying those closest to him, writing and publishing, and participating in his lifetime passion – fishing. In March 1912, the Stanley family celebrated Henry's 83rd birthday at his Weld Street home. Stanley became ill in early January 1913 and on the 11th died after an illness of about a week. He is buried with his

parents, second wife, and two brothers in the Greenwood Cemetery, Weld Street, Dixfield, Maine.

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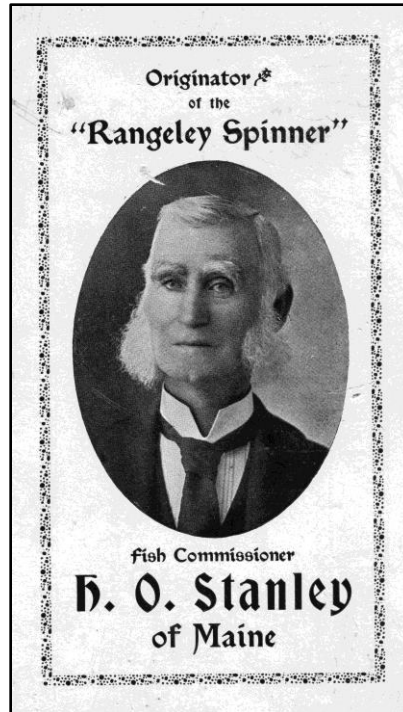
Stowell, P. S. 2013. *Images of America – Dixfield*. Arcadia Publishing, Charleston, South Carolina. [This booklet contains numerous photographs of H. O. Stanley and his family].

A Gallery of Photographs of Henry O. Stanley's Fishing Tackle Business



Courtesy of Nancy McReynolds.

The retail shop of H. O. Stanley & Son's Sporting Goods and Bicycle Shop. In addition to selling fishing tackle and other sporting goods, this shop also sold and repaired bicycles, as was common in the late 1800s. Stanley owned other buildings in Dixfield, and because he employed up to a dozen people at a time to assist in the making of flies and lures, it's likely that lure manufacturing occurred in one of his larger buildings.




Author's collection.

Henry O. Stanley published the above Catalog describing the flies and lures made Henry and his son, George P. Stanley. While H. O. Stanley & Son was in business for approximately fifteen years, 1898-1913, both the State of Maine and Rangeley spinners, as well as the Stanley Smelt, were all first made before 1898 by H. O. Stanley Sporting Goods.



Courtesy of the Dixfield Historical Society.

An advertising card (2 2/5 X 4 3/5 in.) issued by H. O. Stanley & Son. The Stanleys knew the value of advertising and, in addition to the above Catalog and card, they placed advertisements in Maine outdoor sporting periodicals (especially those published by Henry's colleague and friend, Leroy T. Carleton.).



Stanley Smelt

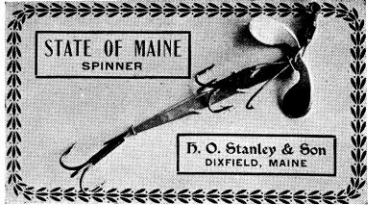
Packed 1 dozen in box.
Each, \$.25

Stanley Smelt


Packed 1 dozen in box.
Each, \$.25

State of Maine Spinner

Packed 1 dozen in a box. Each, \$.25



Rangeley Spinners



No. 1. Loose or Double Hooks,	Each, \$.25
No. 2. Loose or Double Hooks with Bass Flies,	Each, .50
No. 3. Loose or Double Hooks with Salmon Flies,	Each, .75
No. 4. Extra with Double Hook, Silver Spoon,	Each, .50
No. 5. Bass Flies, Gold Spoon,	Each, .75
No. 6. Bass Flies, Silver Spoon,	Each, .75
No. 7. Salmon Flies, Gold Spoon,	Each, 1.00
No. 8. Jock Scott, Silver Spoon,	Each, 1.00

Salmon Flies furnished : Jock Scott, Silver Doctor, Dusty Miller.
Bass Flies furnished : Parmachenee Belle, Col. Fuller, Toodle Bug.

Packed 1 dozen in box

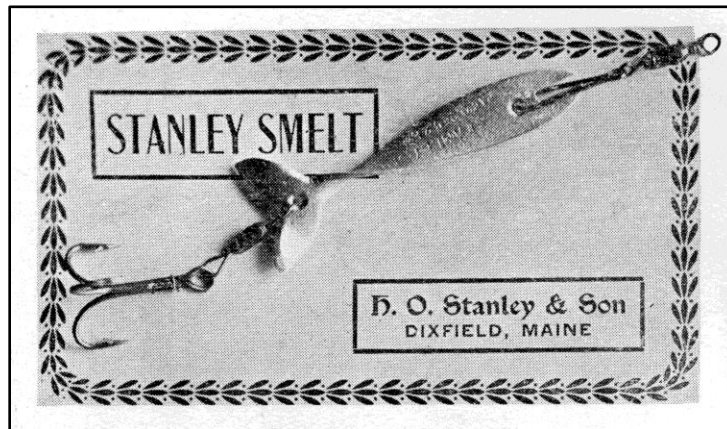
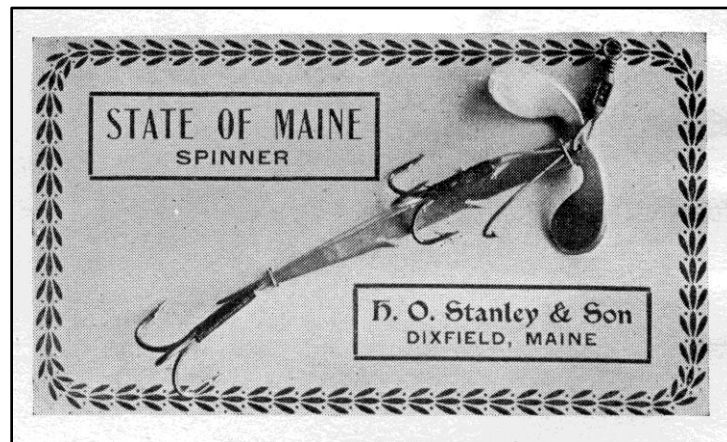
Author's collection.

The above illustration is the right side of page 79 of the T. B. Davis Fishing Tackle Catalog Number 41 (circa 1910). At this time, these three lures along with flies and leaders were the fishing tackle produced by H. O. Stanley & Son. Assuming that Stanley's Cupsuptic Spinner was initially produced around the time it was first advertised, this lure did not appear on the market until the spring of 1909, only 4 years before Stanley died.



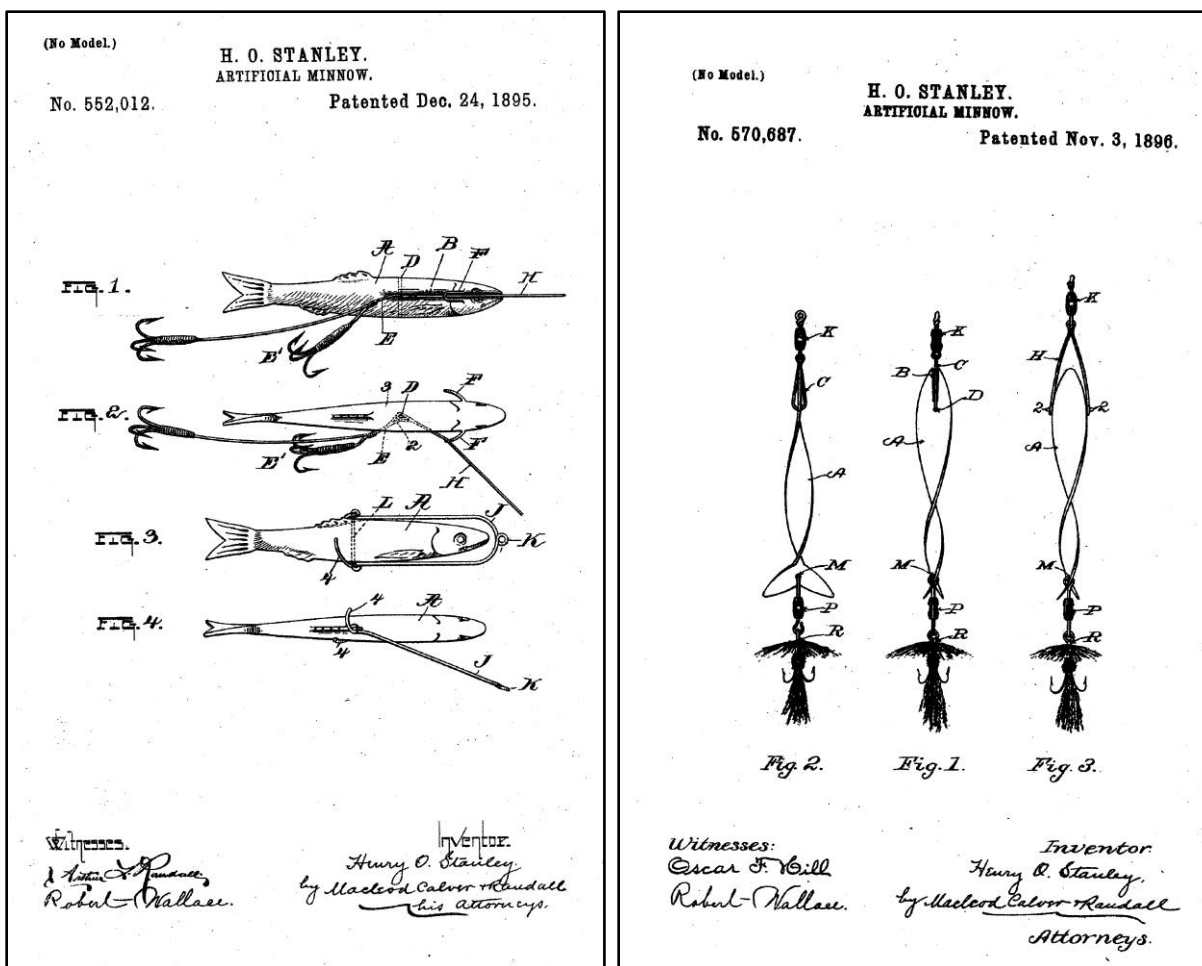
Author's collection.

The State of Maine dead-bait spinner came in two sizes; shown above is the small size. This example is an extra special find for a number of reasons. First, it's the only one the author has ever seen in original condition (i.e., still attached to a H. M. [sic] Stanley & Son card). Second, the carded spinner is in the original box. Note that the treble hooks are attached to smooth, silkworm gut looped onto a metal ring (lower left photo). In contrast, after 1899 the treble hooks were tied onto a thin cable and a metal clip held together the spinner's three components (lower right photo).



Author's collection.

The State of Maine Spinner (upper illustration; “For “Spinning A Minnow”) and the Stanley Smelt (lower), both made of aluminum, were sold on cards (as shown). The spinner, made in two sizes, is early, not stamped, and very rare with only a few examples known to the author. The smelt is much more widely known to collectors and is clearly stamped with the lure’s name and two patent dates. (There are a few Stanley Smelts, however, marked with only the first patent date [see next illustration], making these scares and the earliest.). The Stanley Aluminum Smelt was made in at least eight sizes, ranging from 1 ¼ to 3 ¾ inches in length with the 2 ¼, 2 ¾, 3 ¼, and the 3 ¾ being the most common. Stanley Smelt came both with bare and feathered treble hooks, and are rarely found in boxes. The above illustration are from the T. B. Davis Fishing Tackle Catalog Number 41 (circa 1910, page 79).



From U. S. Patent Office web site.

Today, the Stanley Aluminum Smelt is well known to collectors of early American fishing lures. D. Murphy and R. Edmisten, on page 300 of their 2007 book entitled *Fish Lure Collectibles – An Encyclopedia of the Early Years, 1840 to 1940*, lists the Stanley Smelt as being made by “Stanley & Chapman, Boston, Massachusetts.” This listing was apparently based on an advertisement for The Stanley Smelt that appeared in *Forest and Stream* during the spring and summer of 1895. And while the first patent for the Aluminum Smelt, dated 24 December 1895 was co-assigned to Henry O. Stanley and L. Dana Chapman of Brookline, Massachusetts, the second patent for this lure dated 3 November 1896 was assigned only Henry O. Stanley (copy of Stanley’s original patent papers in author’s collection). From 1896 on advertisements for the Stanley Aluminum Smelt make no mention of Chapman, suggesting their partnership had been dissolved.



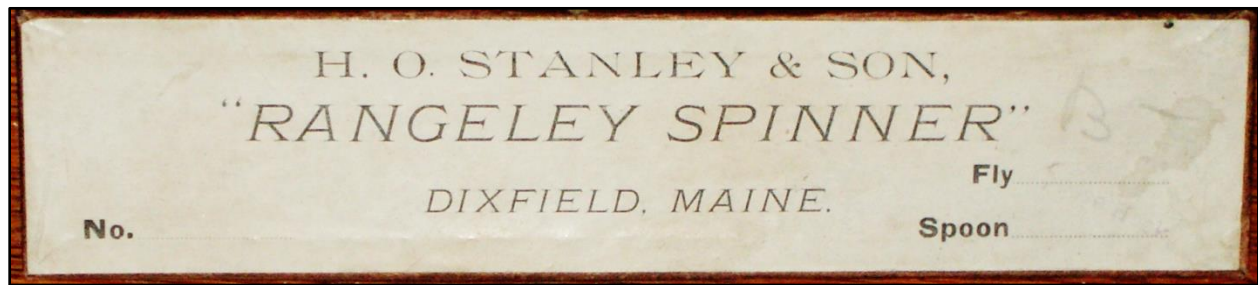
Courtesy of Ron Goddard (top) and author's collection (bottom).

The State of Maine Spinner is, by far, the rarest of the four lures made Henry O. Stanley. Both of these examples were found as parts with the lure on the bottom right fully reassembled, and the lure on the top right partially reassembled. The aluminum section of the larger lure is 2 ½ inches long.



Courtesy of Ron Goddard.

In the spring of 1897, Stanley and two companions each trolled a live minnow on one rod and a Stanley Aluminum Smelt on the other, for a total of six rods. They conducted this experiment on two Maine lakes and Stanley reported that “Every strike we had was on the [aluminum] smelt.” The lower lure has only the 1895 patent date, a very rare variant of the Stanley Smelt. The upper lure, from tip of the tail to the tip of the nose, is 3 ½ inches in length, and has both the 1895 and 1896 patent dates (see patent drawings above).



Courtesy of Jeff Knapp.



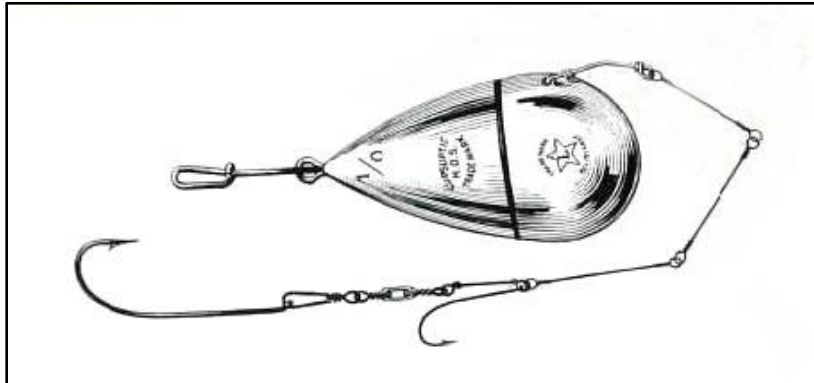
Courtesy of Dan Leroux.

Stanley's Rangeley Spinner was extremely popular and sold individually as well as in boxes, as shown above (Note: the above spinner is a reproduction). According to the illustration in the Stanley & Son Catalog, the blade of this spinner is stamped "RANGELEY" across the top – just above the fluting – and above this is a single number indicating blade size (generally a 3 or 4). Stanley apparently felt no need for additional markings because he was the sole maker of this spinner in the late 1800s and early 1900s. Today, positive identification of a Stanley Rangeley Spinner is problematic due to a lack of markings tying the spinner directly to Henry O. Stanley. (The Stanley Cupsuptic Spinner, in contrast, is clearly stamped "H.O.S."; see below). The above boxes are approximately 7 3/8 X 2 1/8 X 5/8 inches.



Courtesy of Nancy McReynolds.

Three lures once owned by Henry O. Stanley and his son, George P. Stanley. As mentioned above, Stanley Rangeley Spinners are not uniquely marked making positive identification impossible. Thus, this above Rangeley Spinner is the only one the author has seen that can be said with certainty to be a Stanley Rangeley Spinner. George Page Stanley, the last Stanley to have used these lures, apparently modified each one (i.e., single hook and new swivel on tail of the Stanley Smelt, nylon leader and extra swivel on the Rangeley, and wire leader and hand-tied fly on the H.O.S. Cupsuptic). The Stanley Smelt, tip of head to tail, is 3 $\frac{3}{4}$ inches in length, the longest size known.



Courtesy of Arlan Carter.



Courtesy of Jeff Knapp.

A drawing (left) and close-up photograph (right) of the Stanley Cupsuptic Spinner. Note the star with an “L” on the bottom part of the blade; this denotes that the lure was made by W. T. J. Lowe of Buffalo, New York. Also note the upper half of the blade stamped “CUPSUPTIC / H.O.S. / TRADEMARK”; this stamping denotes Henry O. Stanley and is absent from the Cupsuptic Spinners later produced and sold by Lowe under his name only.



Courtesy of Arlan Carter.

A Stanley Cupsuptic Spinner with an original box. A box has also been found labeled “FRANK STANLEY / ‘CUPSUPTIC SPINNER’ / DIXFIELD, ME.” Both boxes are approximately 3 3/8 by 1 3/4 inches. The Frank Stanley box is purple and extremely rare. A newspaper advertisement published by the Wells Sporting Goods Company in Auburn, Maine, declared that the angler should “Try a Stanley Cupsuptic Spinner the next time you are going where live bait is hard to get. You won’t need live bait.” (*Lewiston Saturday Journal* , 15 April 1911).



Author's collection.

Stanley Cupsuptic Spinners come in two versions identifiable by their shafts. The shaft in the upper photograph is the original Stanley Cupsuptic, and the hook harness could only be attached to a hole in the lower half of the blade (and thus the functions only as a wobbler; produced 1907-08 to Feb. 1910). In the "New" Stanley Cupsuptic Spinner (lower photograph; produced March 1910 to ~1915), the hook harness could be attached to either the lower end of the shaft or to a in the bottom of the blade. With these two configurations, the later lure could be worked either as a wobbler (harness attached to blade) or as a true spinner (hook harness attached to the lower end of the shaft).



Author's collection.

When Henry O. Stanley died in 1913, his younger brother, Frank, continued to have the Lowe Company make Cup-suptic Spinners which he sold with the "H.O.S." stamped blade. After a few years, Frank Stanley ceased selling this spinner and William T. J. Lowe continued producing the Cup-suptic with his own markings (upper illustration). Like the Stanleys, Lowe made the lure in three sizes. Having lures on unaltered cards is useful to document the original arrangement of the hook harness (lower illustration) as anglers often customized hook arrangements.

**FRED E. BAILEY (1854-1940):
Maker of Fine Fishing Flies and Spinners
Dover-Foxcroft, Maine**



Blade of a Bailey Spinner. (Author's collection).

Fred E. Bailey was a member of the third of four generations of Baileys to live and work in Dover-Foxcroft, Maine. He and his associates also set the longevity records for the early Maine makers of fishing flies and lures, being in business for 64 continuous years. Bailey started commercially making high-quality, hand-tied flies in 1884, selling his product at the Kineo House at Moosehead Lake. His business quickly expanded and soon he was selling his flies in general stores and sporting goods retailers from Greenville on shores of Moosehead Lake to downtown Bangor on the banks of the Penobscot River. Around 1899, Bailey first invented and

produced trolling lures. Bailey was joined by his son, Carl R. Bailey, in 1903 to form F. E. Bailey & Son. This joint venture ceased operations in 1912 when Carl made photography his full-time business. After Fred died in 1940, the tackle business was run by his daughter-in-law, Mary A. Bailey. As Fred's eyesight failed in the years before his death, Mary increasingly helped in the tackle business while at the same time running her family's photography business (Carl was gassed during World War I and his eyesight also failed in his later years). Mary A. Bailey was assisted by Lorraine Libby, Fred and Mary Bailey's adopted daughter. After Fred's wife died (1930 or earlier), Lorraine moved in Carl and his wife. Both Mary A. and Lorraine continued producing and selling the Bailey flies and spinners after the founder's death in 1940. When Mary A. Bailey died in 1948, the tackle making ceased, and so ended a fishing tackle business that had existed on the banks of the Piscataquis River in central Maine for almost six and one-half decades.

Fred E. Bailey was born on October 9, 1854. His father was Erastus W. Bailey (1825-1904) and his mother Mary C. Littlefield (1828-1895). The couple was married on April 16, 1852 in Foxcroft, Maine. Erastus Bailey operated a wood working and furniture business with his brother, Dexter. Erastus' parents, John (1790-1898) and Clarissa (1805-1869) Bailey, had moved to Foxcroft in 1834 from Turner, Maine. In 1870, the U.S. Census shows Erastus and Mary C, along with John and Clarissa, living together in Dover along with Fred E. (15 yrs. old) and his sister Florence (age 6 yrs. old).

Little is known about Fred's childhood and teenage years. As did many children living in

small Maine towns during the mid-1880s, it's likely he hunted the nearby forests and fished the area's streams, rivers, and lakes. Fred was educated "in town schools and at the academy," and worked with relatives, doing general cabinet work and making furniture.

Fred E. Bailey married Mary H. Merrill of Foxcroft on May 15, 1875. The couple was married in Bangor, Maine and resided their entire life in Dover-Foxcroft. They lived on South Street in Dover, occupying the house lived in earlier by Fred's parents. On July 20, 1881 their only son, Carl R. Bailey, was born. Decades later, Fred and Mary adopted Lorraine Libby, age 5, when her first adopted parents died.

In 1884, Bailey started his sporting goods business specializing in quality, hand-tied flies. During this time Bailey was half owner of a building in Foxcroft. His partner, C. M. Hoxie was a taxidermist, and in 1892 Hoxie bought-out Bailey's half of the building in Dover, Maine, and Bailey operated out of his home. In 1899, Bailey first advertised that he was making trolling spinners. Carl R. Bailey joined his father's business in 1903, and four years later Bailey & Son moved their sporting goods store and tackle manufacturing to 77 Lincoln Street, Foxcroft.

Over the decades, Fred Bailey invented a hook-rig for trolling baits, two spinners, and manufactured the Rangeley Spinner, originated by Henry O. Stanley. This later lure was simply named Bailey's Improved Rangeley Spinner. His rig for trolling baits was aptly called the Bailey Trolling Gang, and the spinners he made were called the Bailey Spinner and the Bailey Moosehead Troller. The former was a general purpose lure capable of catching a variety of fish – including brook trout, landlocked salmon, bass, and pickerel – whereas the later spinner was

primarily used for catching lake trout. Of these four products, the Bailey Spinner was by far his best seller; lure collectors most closely associate Fred E. Bailey with this spinner.

The Bailey Studio, which Carl established sometime after leaving the fishing tackle business, specialized in portrait and family photographs. Carl also sold photographs on post cards and in magazines. For example, *The Northern*, a monthly magazine for employees of the Great Northern Paper Company, used landscape photographs taken by the Bailey Studio on their covers (e.g., Nov. 1926; April & July, 1927; and Sept. 1928). In April 1917, Carl, who was a First Lieutenant in the National Guard, went on active duty in the U.S. Army. He served in both Mexico and in France during World War I, rising to the rank of Lieutenant. One source stated that he was attached to General John Joseph “Black Jack” Pershing” as a photographer, but because his military records were destroyed, this could not be verified. Carl was on active duty for two years to the month. While he was gone, his wife continued the photography business.

During his lifetime, Fred Bailey was widely recognized as a manufacturer of flies and spinners. In 1898, author-inventor-sportsman James Chuchward proclaimed in his booklet, *A Big Game and Fishing Guide to North-Eastern Maine*, that the flies “made by C. F. Orvis, of Manchester, Vt., G. H. Burtis, of Worcester, Mass., and F. E. Bailey, Foxcroft, are as good as any to be got in America.” A newspaper declared five years before Bailey died that “Mr. Bailey is known all over New England to anglers for his famous Bailey flies and spinners.” Bailey took pride in his work, stamping his name on each spinner. Of his flies, he noted in one advertisement that while “Bailey’s flies will not last forever, but they will outwear any other

make and take more fish.”

Even though his son was a professional photographer, no photographs of Fred E. Bailey are known. However, a life-long resident of Dover-Foxcroft recalls the senior Bailey as “Having bushy, gray sideburns and untrimmed whiskers that stuck-out from his chin. I was only 8 or 9 years old at the time, and he looked scary.”

On December 20, 1940 Fred E. Bailey died at the age of 86 years. His eye-sight was failing for years and his wife had predeceased him by at least a decade. Mary A. Bailey and Lorraine Libby (later to marry and become a Govan), who had helped Fred with his business before his death, continued to make and sell flies and spinners after Fred’s death. Carl, who had been wounded with mustard gas in France, died in 1943. Five years later, on 18 November 1948, Mary A. Bailey died. Today, four generations of Baileys are buried together in the Rural Grove Cemetery, west of Dover-Foxcroft, Maine. Fred E. Bailey, in an unmarked grave, lies with his paternal grandparents, parents, wife, son, daughter-in-law, and sister.

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Chase, H. 1898. *Dexter, Dover, Foxcroft and Guilford Directory for the Years 1898-9: Containing a Complete Resident, Street and Business Directory*. Published by Henry Chase, Augusta, Maine. 190 pp. [Pages 60 and 131 have Fred E. Bailey making artificial flies and living/working on South Street, Dover, beyond Pine Street].

Haynes, G. H. 1889. *Souvenir of Dover and Foxcroft: The Busy Thriving, Flourishing, Up-To-Date Towns*. Press of Fred D. Burrows, Foxcroft, Maine. 60 pp. [Page 21 has considerable information about F. E. Bailey and his relationship with C. M. Hoxie].


Lowell, Mary Chandler. 1935. *Old Foxcroft, Maine: Traditions and Memories, with Family Records*. Lowell (Rumford Press), Concord, N. H. 262 pp. [Page 156 contains information about the Erastus Bailey and his family].

A Gallery of Fred E. Bailey's High-Quality Fishing Tackle

F. E. BAILEY,
: : : : : FOXCROFT, MAINE, : : : : :
MANUFACTURER OF
The Well-Known Bailey Flies,
WHICH ARE WARRANTED NOT TO STRIP FROM THE HOOK,
OR PULL FROM THE GUT.
If your dealer does not keep them, send your order to the Manufacturer.

TROUT, BASS, AND SALMON FLIES
ON HAND, AND TIED TO ORDER.
ORDERS BY MAIL PROMPTLY FILLED, and SATISFACTION GUARANTEED.

A FULL LINE OF
FISHING TACKLE AND SPORTING GOODS IN STOCK.



This fly is warranted not to strip
or pull from the gut.
MADE BY
F. E. BAILEY, FOXCROFT, MAINE.

ALL FLIES WARRANTED
AS ABOVE.
NO CHEAP GOODS MADE.

Courtesy of Jim Hanlon.

Fred E. Bailey initially made only high-quality fishing flies. Shown here is the first known advertisement for Bailey tackle, printed in 1890 on page 22 of George H. Haynes' *The Charming Inland Summer Retreats of Maine*, published by the Maine Central Railroad, Portland, Maine.



Author's collection.



Courtesy of Jeff Knapp.

Early Bailey flies were sold on at least two different types of cards as shown above. Note that at the time these cards were printed (and the above advertisement published), Bailey was located in Foxcroft, Maine. Because the towns of Dover and Foxcroft were administratively merged into Dover-Foxcroft in March of 1922, the above flies were made prior to that year (the upper fly may have been made as early as the beginning of the 1890s). The above cards are approximately 6 X 1 ½ inches.



Author's collection.

The top end of blades on Bailey's three types of spinners are characteristically stamped with his name. Note the variation in font types, sizes, and name placement. The cooper blade on the left is from a Moosehead Troller whereas the next two nickel-coated blades are from Bailey Spinners (for scale, see Moosehead Troller blade below). The under-sides of blades of Bailey Spinners are characteristically painted bright red.



Courtesy of Ron Goddard.

The largest (left) and smallest (right) Bailey blades the authors has seen. The large blade is made of copper with a nickel front coating (shown above), and may have been used on a Moosehead Troller (see below). The small blade may have been used on Bailey's Rangeley Spinner.

THE BEST THING YET.



Bailey's SPOON MINNOW TACKLE

A 20¢

B 25¢

C 30¢

D 35¢

Sent Postpaid on receipt of price.

F. E. BAILEY, Manufacturer of the Bailey Flies,
❖❖ FOXCROFT, MAINE.

Author's collection.

This is the first advertisement that Bailey ran announcing a line of trolling spinners. This advertisement was published on page 80 of Leroy T. Carleton. 1899. *Carleton's Pathfinder and Gazetteer of the Hunting and Fishing Resorts of the State of Maine*. Observer Publications, Dover, Maine. Like all of Bailey's advertisements over the decades, this publication had a direct tie to Dover and Foxcroft. Note use of capital letters to identify hook arrangements.



Author's collection.

F. E. Bailey & Son, Foxcroft, Maine existed from 1902-12 making this the oldest Bailey lure box the author has ever seen. Note the red label on the top lid was put over an earlier black label and the lower box lacks in inner label used in later boxes (see illustration below). This box measures 7 3/8 X 2 1/8 X 1/2 inches.



Courtesy of Ron Goddard.

Apparently, Bailey initially called this lure "Bailey's Spoon/ Minnow Tackle" (ad at top of previous page), but at some point changed the name to "Bailey's Trolling Gang." Lures boxes used by F. E. Bailey in Dover-Foxcroft were characteristically labeled inside (box on bottom) as well as outside (box on top). The above box measures 7 1/2 X 1 5/8 X 5/8 inches.



Courtesy of Dwight Demeritt.

The Moosehead Troller was Bailey's largest and most specialized fishing spinner, designed for catching lake trout. Note the "Patent Applied For" in the lower left corner. The author has been unable to find a patent for any of Bailey's fishing lures.



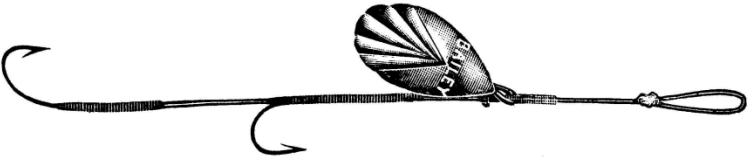
Courtesy of Ron Goddard.

Apparently, Bailey also made the single spinner from the large (left) and small (right) blades of his Moosehead Troller. These single examples are rare and appear to have been early in Bailey's career.



Courtesy of Dwight Demeritt.

Above is Fred E. Bailey's version of the Rangeley Spinner, invented and initially made by Henry O. Stanley of Dixfield, Maine. The leaders are made of twisted gut and this spinner, compared to the Bailey Spinner, is lightly constructed. Like most Bailey spinners, the blades' undersides are red. The above box is 7 1/2 X 1 5/8 X 5/8 inches.

The "BAILEY SPINNER" Style A		Price, Nickle Spoon	25c
		Price, Gold Spoon	35c
		Post paid on receipt of Price	
		F. E. Bailey	
		Dover-Foxcroft	- Maine
HOOK SIZE	Nos. 1, 2, 3, 4,		

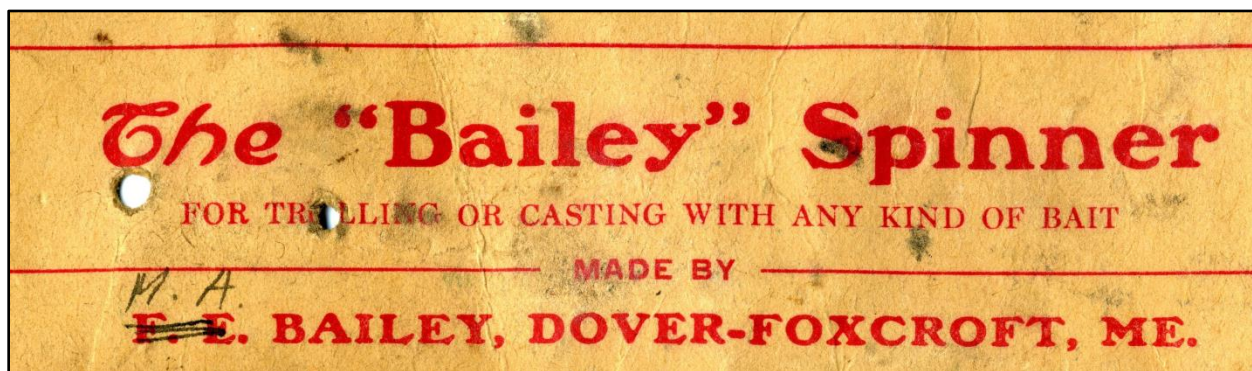
Courtesy of Carlton Pratt.

This is the last advertisement of Fred E. Bailey tackle that the author found. Bailey's last advertisements were printed during the spring of 1929 in *Maine Recreation*, a short-lived periodical distributed via mail from Dover-Foxcroft, Maine. Typically, the Bailey Spinner had detachable hooks (see below) whereas Baileys Rangeley Spinner, like the spinner shown here, had permanent hooks (see above).



Author's collection.

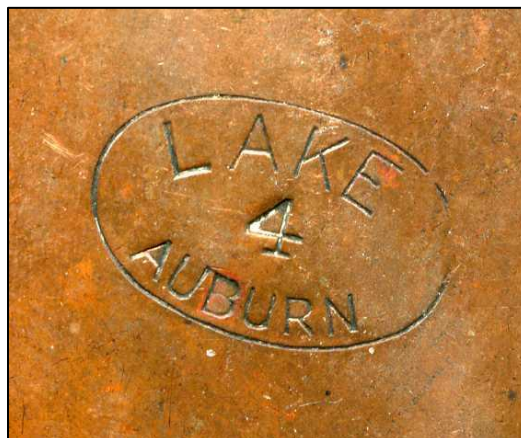
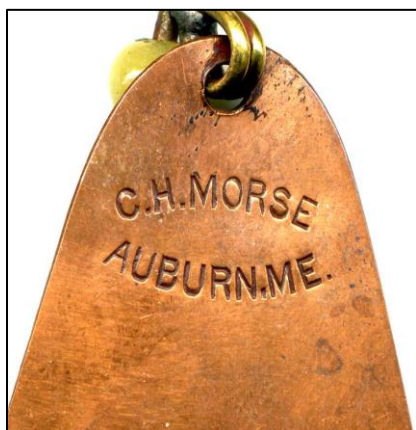
An early (left) versus a later (right) Bailey Spinner. The key differences are: box versus barrel swivels, glass versus plastic beads, twisted gut versus steel leader, bottom of blade unpainted versus painted red, wide versus narrower blade, and sold in a plastic bottle with a label (later versions only). The NR4-1 on the label translates to “a blade that is nickel on top, red on the bottom (characteristic of most of Bailey’s spinner blades), size 4 (his most common), and one blade (versus 2 blades).”



Author's collection.

Bailey Spinners were sold on cards as well as in plastic bottles (see above). Note that on the above card “F. E.” (= Fred E.) is crossed-out and replaced by “M.A.” Mary A. Bailey was Fred’s daughter-in-law who took over the business after Fred’s death in 1940. When she died in 1948, the manufacturing of Bailey tackle ceased.

CHARLES H. MORSE (1868-1931): Maker of Metal Trolling Spoons Auburn, Maine



Author's collection.

Charles H. Morse was born in 1868 on the day before Christmas in Charlestown, Massachusetts. His parents were Charles A., and Lydia G., Morse. As a two-year old child, he lived with his parents and paternal grandparents in Stoneham, Massachusetts. Morse was educated in eastern Massachusetts. When 23 years, he started playing minor league baseball in Providence, Rhode Island. Later that year (i.e., 1891) he moved to the Twin Cities of Lewiston-Auburn, Maine. Here Morse played in the Lewiston team for part or all of three seasons (i.e., 1891, 1896, & 1901). In 1899, Morse played for the Rochester, New York team where a local newspaper declared "Morse comes pretty near to being the premier pitcher of this league." Morse, a left-hander, pitched for approximately 10 teams between 1891 and 1904. In 14 seasons he played in 315 games, pitching in more than 1,500 innings during 11 seasons (3 seasons he played positions other than pitcher). According to his obituary, Morse "gained quite a reputation on the mound in

the Eastern league. He retired from baseball about 25 years ago (~1906) having last played on the Ilion team in the New York State League.” Apparently because he was usually the oldest player on his ball team, Morse’s nicknames included “Gramp,” “Gramps,” “Grandpa,” “Pa,” “Pop,” and Pops.”

When he first moved to Maine, Morse settled in Lewiston and through the years moved a number of times between the Twin Cities. Because baseball occupied only part of his year, Morse also worked in local shoe factories and probably started making his trolling spoon around the turn of the century. On 28 June 1902, Morse married Lena M. Johnson of Auburn. He was 33 years old at the time of his marriage, and Lena was 9 years his senior. The couple married in Morse’s hometown of Stoneham, Massachusetts, but they quickly returned to Maine where he continued to play baseball for another four or so years before retiring. Lena made shoes in Auburn factories from the time she was a teenager well into her adult life. The couple did not have any children.

What kind of person was Charles H. Morse? Surprisingly, I found 27 articles that mention Gramp(s) Morse in newspapers published in Lewiston, Maine. Twenty-five of the articles cover the period June 1901 through January 1923, when Morse was still living. Interestingly, only one article mentions Morse’s proper first name. While Charles H. Morse was generally known as “Pa” or “Pop” to the followers of minor league baseball, he was always Gramp(s) Morse to the people of the Twin Cities.

The content and number of the articles located demonstrate that Morse was well known

and highly respected in his adopted towns of Auburn and Lewiston. Taken as a whole, these articles show a civic-minded man and a natural athlete who enjoyed a variety of team and outdoor sports. Morse not only play professional baseball, but he also organized local games for fun and to raise funds for civic causes, including Auburn's Old Ladies Home. When Morse had his appendix removed in July 1901, the Auburn Policemen and the Pencil Pushers (= local newspaper reporters) organized a baseball game with the gate proceeds going to help cover Morse's hospital expenses. Once back up and on his feet, "Gramps" was invited to umpire the game because in previous benefit games his officiating "gave entire satisfaction on both sides."

A year after his surgery, Morse had another close call. As reported in the *Lewiston Daily Sun* on 1 August 1902:

Lewiston and Auburn friends of "Gramp" Morse who was injured recently in New York State with a line of baseball players while crossing a railroad track in a team [another report stated that he was injured while "riding in a barge"], were pleased to know that he was not killed in the accident. "Gramp" has met many unfortunate occurrences during his career as a baseball player. He has been bit by a mad dog, had an attack of appendicitis, been operated upon and met with other minor unfortunate happenings. It is hoped by a large circle of his admirers that his injuries will not prove fatal and it is expected that unless those sustained by him were of a most serious nature that he will be on the diamond in a few days with the little round baseball in his hand ready as ever to show the "boys" how to twirl them.

Morse soon recovered and settled with the railroad company for his injuries and time lost from playing ball.

Charles Morse was a dog lover and in December 1902, as part of the annual City Hall Poultry Show in Lewiston, organized a show of hunting dogs. The show was a great success, with

Morse publically proclaiming he would make it even bigger and better the next year. In the fall, Morse hunted ruffed grouse and woodcock with pointing dogs, and in winter used hounds to pursue snowshoe rabbits and red foxes in the forests and fields north of Auburn. Morse also enjoyed ice skating during the winter, perhaps seeing this as a way to stay in shape for the baseball. In an article printed in the *Lewiston Daily Sun* on 11 January 1923, the author wrote:

“Gramps” reputation as a skater is well known about town but he made the eyes of the youngsters stick out yesterday when he did fancy stunts for their benefit. He cut all kinds of didoes [pranks] and scratched his name the ice. The rink is crowded long in the evening when the lights are in use.

Slightly more than half of the news articles found were about Morse’s baseball activities – noting what team he had signed with, when he left town for the season, and comments about his victories and defeats. At a July 4th game played in 1901 with 1,500 fans in attendance, the Auburn team soundly defeated the Lewistons. Morse was the pitcher for the winning team and the *Lewiston Daily Sun* declared that “It was one of the greatest exhibitions of pitching that a Lewiston crowd has had the pleasure of witnessing in years.” But if Morse’s team lost, the newspapers just as readily would proclaim that “ ‘Gramp’ Morse proved to be no enigma for Portland today. The famed left-handed twirler was bumped good and hard from start to finish.”

Of all the sporting activities Morse excelled at, the one which he was consistently held in high regards for was fishing, especially trolling for landlocked salmon on Lake Auburn shortly after ice-out. In May 1905 one newspaper declared: “ ‘Gramp’ Morse carried off the honors at Lake Auburn yesterday, his catch being four salmon weighing 9 ½, 4 ½, 3 ½, and 2 pounds. This is a

record breaker for the season.” On May 21 the following year, the *Lewiston Daily Sun* noted that “Owing to the prevailing high wind Saturday and Sunday, few fishermen ventured on Lake Auburn. The waves were running as high as barrels, making boating dangerous to anyone who did not understand how to row.” Apparently, Morse knew how to row in high waves for on Saturday he caught the largest salmon of the day, tipping the scale at 6 ½ pounds. On Sunday, he landed a 4 ½ pound landlocked salmon.

From 1914 through 1925, the *Androscoggin County Directories* shows Charles and Lena Morse renting on Pleasant and Hampshire streets in Auburn. Around 1922, the Morses bought a house at 52 Hampshire Street in Auburn. Charles H. Morse is last listed in the *Androscoggin Directory* of 1926, and apparently ceased making the Lake Auburn Trolling Spoon sometime in 1927 (see Gallery below). In 1928, Morse was admitted to the State Mental Hospital on Arsenal Street in Augusta, Maine where he died on August 31, 1931. According to Morse’s death record, he died from a “General paralysis of the insane.” Charles H. Morse, age 62, was buried in North Auburn Cemetery, less than a mile north of the inlet to his beloved Lake Auburn. Lena retired from shoe making and shortly before her husband’s death, and roomed at the Marcotte Home, a facility for the elderly ran by the Catholic Church in Lewiston. She died in 1938.

Thirteen years after Morse’s death, an article published in the *Lewiston Daily Sun* on 12 December 1944 recalled times past when Auburn’s citizens skated on the frozen surfaces of the Androscoggin River and Lake Auburn. The reminiscence included:

Scores [of ice skaters] paused in their day’s sport to watch the gyrations of ‘Gramp’ Morse of Auburn. Compared to the average or good skater, ‘Gramp’ was an artist.

Perhaps he didn't know the whole routine, but he could cut enough figures to hold spectators spell-bound.

'Gramp' Morse probably had a first name, but nobody ever used it. He was not only a fine figure skater, but a hunter and fisherman, a mighty good pocket billiards player, and before that was a baseball player of more than local reputation.

'Gramp' and his cronies are gone and nobody has appeared to take his place.

While Charles H. Morse has passed, and only a few published memories of the man remain, his legacy lives on in that his metal lures strongly influenced Maine's other early makers of trolling spoons. Documentation of this influence, along with detailed descriptions and photographs of Morse's trolling spoons, can be found in Krohn (2014).

References

Anonymous. 1931. Charles H. Morse [obituary]. *Lewiston Daily Sun*, Lewiston, Maine, page 15 (September 2).

Anonymous. 1910. Baseball in Lewiston and Auburn, as a sport and a profession – how the game revived in 1884 with the “Lewistons.” *Lewiston Saturday Journal*, Lewiston, Maine, pages 9 and 14. (April 30). [Includes photographs of 15 players, including a portrait photo of “Charles ‘Gramp’ Morse”].

Anonymous. Undated. Baseball-Reference.com. Charles H. Morse; see: <http://www.baseball-reference.com/minors/player.cgi?id=morse-001cha>

Krohn, W. B. 2014. Trolling spoons and baseball: the life, lures, and legacy of Charles H. Morse. *The National Fishing Lure Collectors Club Magazine*, 24 (1): 4-9 (Summer Issue). [In addition to documenting Morse's baits, the article assesses the Morse's effect on the trolling spoons made after his death by Bill Burgess and the Murray brothers; includes numerous color illustrations.] [An editor's correction for the first paragraph of this piece was published on page 3 of the 2014 Winter Issue of the *NFLCC Magazine*].

H. A. Manning Company. Compiler and publisher. *Manning's Lewiston and Auburn Directory*. [Issues from 1930 through 1939 were searched, but not every year was available.].

Merrill & Webber Company. Compiler and publisher. *Resident and Business Directory of Androscoggin County, Maine*. [Issues from 1902-03 through 1928 were searched, but not every year was available.].

Turner, A. R. *Turner's Androscoggin County Directory*. A. R. Turner, Auburn, Maine. [Issues of 1896-97 and 1898-99 were searched.].

A Gallery of Charles H. Morse's Lake Auburn Trolling Spoons



Lake Auburn Salmon, 10 1-4 lbs.

CHAS. H. MORSE

16 Blake Street

LEWISTON, ME,

Registered Guide, State of Maine

Lake Auburn is one of the best salmon lakes in the State of Maine. In the months of May and June, the fishing is at its best. The Lake Auburn Fish Hatchery is situated on this lake, and every year, from seventy thousand to one hundred thousand salmon and trout are liberated in its waters. The salmon are good fighters, and they average in weight from 1 1-2 lbs. to 12 lbs. Any one wishing information in regard to boating or fishing here, will receive prompt attention by writing

Yours respectfully,

CHAS. H. MORSE,

Guide

Courtesy of Dave Fuller.

A post card advertising the guiding services of Charles H. Morse, shown here holding a large, male landlocked salmon. This post card, circa 1910, was made a four or so years after Morse retired from minor league baseball, and shortly before he and Lena, his wife, moved from Lewiston to Auburn, Maine. In addition to guiding during this period, Morse was making and selling his trolling spoons.



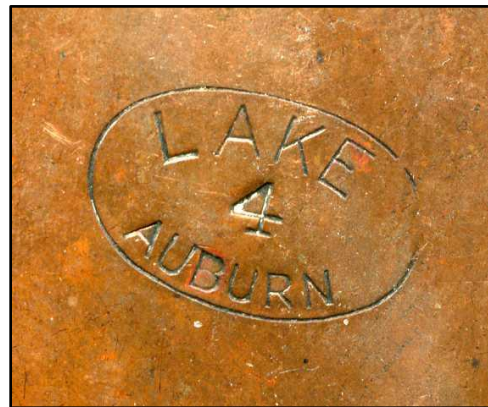
Author's collection.

Above are examples of Morse's Lake Auburn Trolling Spoon: an unstamped spoon (left), a spoon only stamped on the top of the blade (middle), and a spoon stamped on both the top and bottom of the blade (right). The brass shafts of a Morse spoon are relatively thick, long, and bent in one of two ways as shown below, with the circle at the bottom end on the shaft (spoon on the right below) being more characteristic of a Morse spoon. The middle spoon is 4 inches long.



Author's collection.

The underside of Morse's spoons, as shown above, are coated in melted lead. Morse's early Lake Auburn spoons had a porcelain bead above a metal bead that was soldered to the shaft (left and middle spoons), whereas his later spoons used two metal beads, again with the lower bead soldered to the shaft (right spoon).



Author's collection.

The lure's size, if present, is stamped either at the top of the spoon along with Morse's name or lower on the blade in the "LAKE AUBURN" as shown above. The higher the number the smaller the spoon (see next illustration).



Author's collection.

A series of Morse's Lake Auburn Trolling Spoons, with cooper spoons on the top row and brass on the bottom. The sizes of the individual spoons are as follows (left to right): top – 1, 02, 3, 4, and 6; bottom – 04 and 7. All of the above cooper spoons have lead-coated undersides whereas the spoons on the bottom row are brass on both sides. The spoon on the top row, far left is 4 1/4 inches long.



Courtesy of Dan Leroux (left) and Ron Goddard (right).

Two rare and unusually shaped Lake Auburn Trolling Spoons. By tapering the blade in the above form, it has the general form of a forage fish. Note the bent, long clip at the lower end of the shaft and the porcelain/metal bead combination at the shaft's top; both features are characteristic of Morse's work. These fish-shaped spoons are 3 inches in length.



Courtesy of Ron Goddard.

An elongated Lake Auburn Trolling Spoon (left) and a double-bladed spinner (upper blade is copper, lower blade is brass) believed to have been made by C. H. Morse. Only one example of these two lures are known, and thus this attribution to Morse is tentative.

LAKE AUBURN SPOONS

(Not illustrated)

Used for attractors for deep trolling. Spoons are made of copper and are furnished with brass wire hangers.

No.	Size	Each
1	4 $\frac{1}{4}$ inches x 1 $\frac{7}{8}$ inches	\$.75
2	4 inches x 1 $\frac{3}{4}$ inches	.60
3	3 $\frac{1}{2}$ inches x 1 $\frac{5}{8}$ inches	.50
4	3 $\frac{1}{4}$ inches x 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ inches	.40
5	2 $\frac{3}{4}$ inches x 1 $\frac{3}{8}$ inches	.40
6	2 $\frac{1}{4}$ inches x 1 $\frac{1}{4}$ inches	.40

Author's collection.

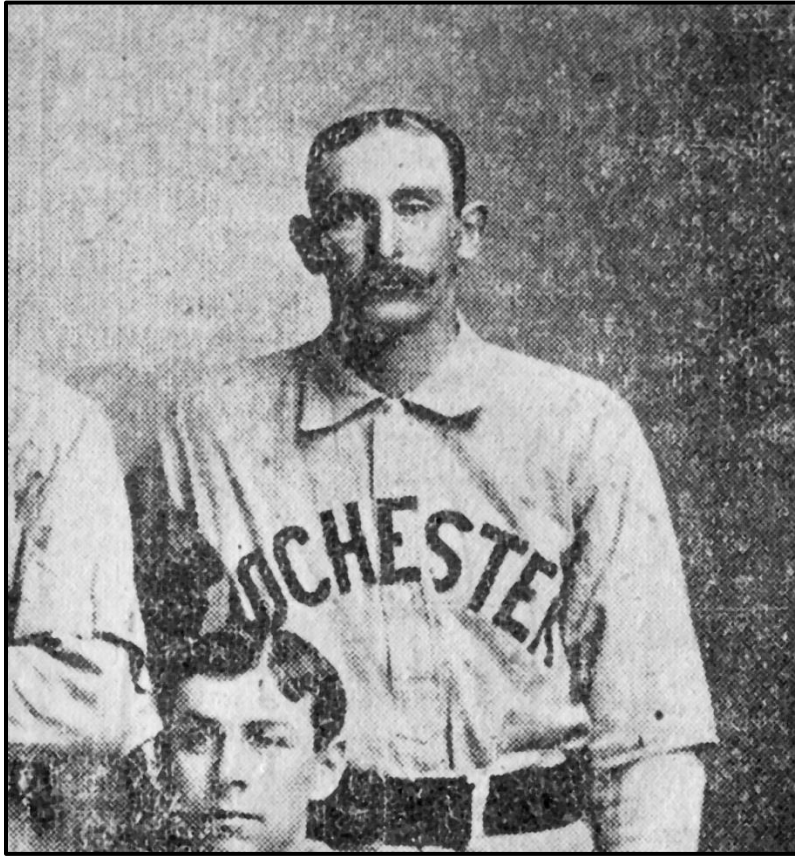
According to a chart published on page 54 of the T. B. Davis Tackle Catalog No. 45, circa 1927, the Lake Auburn Spoon was made in 6 sizes. However, I have seen Morse spoons ranging from size 1 (the largest) to 9 (the smallest). Morse used the same numbering system on both his copper and brass spoons.

LAKE AUBURN SPOONS
(Now State-O-Maine Spoons)

No. 2	2 inches long	.....per dozen	\$4.36
3	3 inches long	.....per dozen	4.68
4	4 inches long	.....per dozen	5.00

Author's collection.

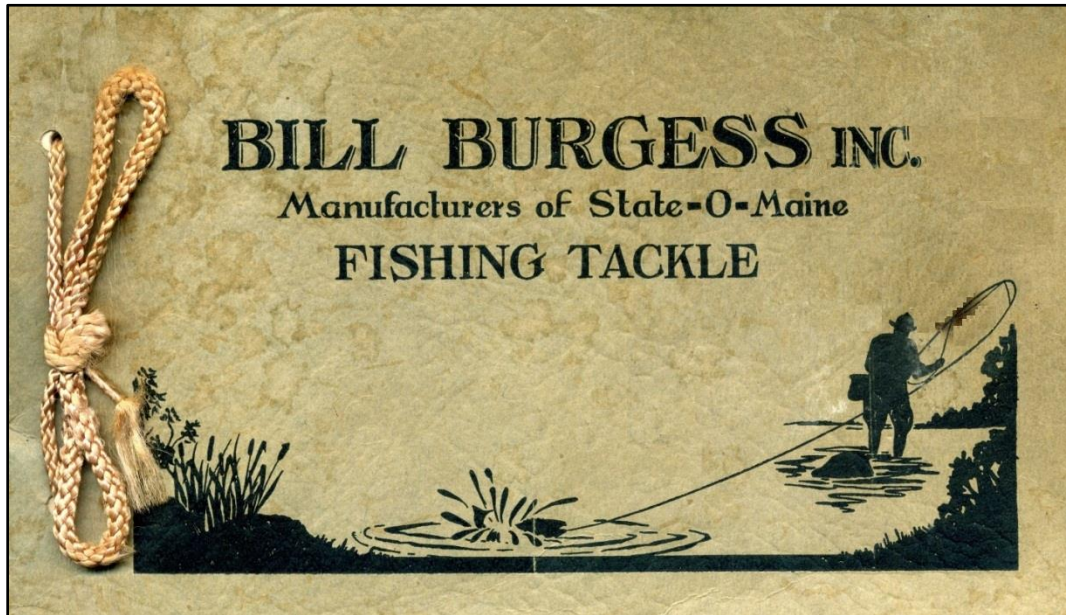
Whereas the uppermost chart from the Davis catalog suggests that Morse's Lake Auburn Spoons were available in 1927, the above chart from page 15 of the 1927 *Wholesale Price List to T. B. Davis' Fishing Tackle Catalog No. 45* suggests otherwise. Note also that the sizes shown in both chart do not match. That is, a Size 2 in the upper chart is 4 inches long whereas in the lower chart a Size 2 is only 2 inches long. Furthermore, Morse did not make the State-O-Maine Spoon; this was a Bill Burgess product (see page 62). Apparently, Morse stopped providing T. B. Davis with Lake Auburn Spoons sometime after the *Catalog No. 45* went to press but before the *Price List for Catalog 45* was printed in 1927.



Courtesy of Craig Brown.

“Pop” Morse in his Rochester (New York) Typewriter’s baseball uniform, 1899. While a top minor league pitcher, Morse never moved up into the major league, possibly because he was older than the typical player and thus may have been thought to have had only a few years of peak performance remaining. To supplement his income, Morse made and sold a high quality trolling spoon, using copper, lead, and brass. According to his death record, he suffered from mental sickness for more than three years before his death. Thus, it’s likely that Morse ceased making his Lake Auburn Trolling Spoon sometime in 1927. Sadly, one has to wonder the degree to which fumes from melted copper and lead may have contributed to Morse’s sickness and death.

**WILLIAM H. “BILL” BURGESS (1886–1967):
Maker of State-O-Maine Fishing Tackle
Minot, Maine**



Catalog courtesy of Dan Leroux.

William H. “Bill” Burgess was born on 13 May 1886 in Mexico, Maine. His parents were Otis William and Emily Farrington Burgess. Bill was the third of four children, with two older sisters and a younger brother. Otis’ family lived in Rumford, Maine where he worked as the track manager for the Portland and Rumford Falls Railroad. In Rumford, Bill was educated to the eighth grade, and worked for the International Paper Company and later the Maine Central Railroad. Bill was also a member of the town’s National Guard unit, 1911-14, rising to the rank of Sergeant.

In the spring of 1914, while still living in Rumford, Bill Burgess married Ethel L. Philbrick. She was 25 years old and he was 28. Bill had been guiding since his late teens in the Rangeley

Lakes Region, and made flies for himself and his clients. Mrs. Burgess quickly became his helpmate and from the start of their marriage, and through their life together, she assisted "... in making flies and they go tramping and hunting and fishing together." Sometime after his marriage Burgess developed, in both paste and liquid forms, his "E.L.B. Fly Dope for them Dog Gorn Flies." Mrs. Burgess (= Ethel L. Burgess = E.L.B.), when out tramping, apparently did not enjoy Maine black flies and mosquitos and in his wife's discomfort Bill saw a need for the repellent formula his grandfather had given him. With the assistance of Dr. Bowers, a Rumford pharmacist, Burgess developed and sold a commercial fly dope. Bowers' help must have made a lasting impression on Burgess as the good doctor is acknowledged in Burgess' fishing tackle catalog. Throughout Burgess' life, even after he moved to Minot, Maine, E.L.B. fly dope was sold with a "Rumford, Maine" label.

In 1922, Bill's father retired from the railroad and the families moved to farm in Poland near the Minot town-line. It was at this time that Bill, with the help of Ethel, started to make flies to sell to the general public. Bill and his wife lived on the second floor of the house occupied by his sister and brother-in-law. This house was next to Otis' home, who farmed during his retirement. In addition to living space, the second floor where Bill and his wife lived also served as the storage and workspace for their growing business.

The Burgesses did not spend all their time working. They owned camps on Beaver Brook in Andover, Silver Lake in Roxbury, and on a track of land they owned on Harris Hill in Poland. Bill enjoyed bird hunting, especially ruffed grouse, and was known for his fine bird dogs, which

he enjoyed training himself. In the early 1930s, Bill was an officer with the Androscoggin County Fish and Game Association and became a leader in the initial attempts to introduced pheasants into Maine, raising these birds on his own property. These were not the only birds that Bill raised. He was also an expert on Plymouth Rock Chickens, raising these birds for eggs, meat, and feathers. The Burgess family used the eggs and meat themselves, selling the eggs and meat that exceeded their needs. The feathers “bring the biggest returns of all,” being used in Bill’s fishing fly business.

By 1930 the fishing tackle business had grown to the point where Bill hired local women to help make the flies and lures. A newspaper reported that much of the tackle making took place in a 10 X 12 foot room, which provided “ample room for a dozen people to work, each with plenty of elbow room, and still provide storage room for a year’s supply of raw material.” The article further noted that “Most of the work is taken out by women who do the work in their own homes in between their household duties.” These workers were apparently supervised by Laura Chouinard, a neighbor’s 19 year-old step-daughter, who is listed in the 1930 U.S. Census as “fish tackle forewoman.”

A variety of feathers and other natural materials were used to make the flies. As reported by a writer who visited Bill’s shop: “He showed feathers which came from China, from Japan, from England, France, South America and all parts of this country and Canada. There were deer tails and bits of rabbit hair, silk gut from Japan and Spain, hooks from Norway and England.” The flies were tied to “gut,” which is of lower visibility than ordinary fishing line. Bill informed his

visitor: “The trade calls it cat gut, but it is the silk worm gut, before it is spun into silk. ... The worm is killed and the gut pulled out.” Cat gut, the intestines from silkworm caterpillars, had to be straightened, dried, and coated to make it waterproof.

Burgess fishing tackle not only included a variety of flies, but he also made fishing spinners and spoons, both those invented by others as well as his own inventions. Bill’s Maine Spinner, for example, was described as “A very successful spinner of the Bailey type.” The illustrations of this spinner show a heavy-duty Rangeley Spinner, essentially the same as the Bailey Spinner. Many of Burgess’ lures were named after Maine lakes (e.g., Bill’s Umbagog, Rangeley Lake Troll, The Richardson, North Twin, Bill’s South-Arm, and Pennessseewassee), but others were not (e.g., the J-H-M Special Salmon, Bill’s Salmo-Combo [a.k.a. Bill’s Combo, Bill’s Salmo], Bill’s Tad Pad, Bill’s Rino, and the State-O-Maine).

Bill sold mostly to sporting goods stores located across southern Maine, as well as to general stores scattered throughout this region. To let these retailers know what he had for products, he published a 51-page catalog, the cover of which is reproduced above. The Burgess Catalog is undated but comparing the prices of his lures in this catalog to a circa 1930 published by T. D. Davis Arms Company, Portland, Maine, suggests that the Burgess Catalog dates to the mid-1930s. While Burgess apparently sold most of his tackle directly to retailers, in the 1930s his tackle was advertised by the T. B. Davis Arms Company, a sporting goods distributor located in Portland, Maine (and elsewhere).

The Burgess Catalog is written in a light, humorous style with Bill sometimes referring to his

tackle as “Junk.” Clearly, Bill Burgess enjoyed life and had a lot of fun manufacturing his State-O-Maine Tackle. As to the content of the Catalog, page one is an introduction (with acknowledgments), the next 11 page are about flies, the 13th page is an informative discussion of silk worm gut leaders followed by 6 pages devoted to Rangeley Spinners, 10 pages about other Burgess spinners, 2 pages about casting spoons, 3 pages on Luck Stowell lures and flies (examples of which the author has not found), 3 pages about Burgess trolling spoons and traces, 2 pages about live bait hooks, 2 pages on Bill’s six ball swivels (his obituary states that he was “the originator” of this swivel), a page about Bill’s fly dope (sold either as a paste or liquid), a page on cooper wire and Bill’s boot-slick (i.e., boot grease for waterproofing), and finally closing with 10 pages about snelled hooks.

Much of Burgess’ fishing tackle came in three grades. For example, his bass flies were available in the following grades: NOCABOUT (each fly was 25 cents), KOMPED (30 cents), and BILL’S BEST (35 cents). Burgess’ silk worm gut leaders also came in three grades which he described: “BILL’S BEST, better known as the No. 99 into which we put all our knowledge and skill, KOMPED BRAND, which is a second choice and the NOCABOUT, which is a darn good Leader for the money and so far as strength goes there is not much difference.” Like the bass flies, there was a 5 cent difference between the grades.

Bill Burgess made a greater variety of flies and lures than any of the other pre-1930 Maine makers. As for quality of his many products, the success of Burgess’ tackle business, according to one newspaper report, was “due in large part, to the plan of manufacture. The goods have not

been made at a price but regardless of price. Quality comes first. He pays his workers more than most manufactures and sells for a good price.”

In 1943, Bill Burgess went into semi-retirement and conducted his tackle business part-time for only a few more years before fully retiring. On January 15, 1967, at age 80, he died in a Lewiston, Maine hospital after a long illness. Just prior to his death, he and his wife lived in Mechanic Falls, Maine. Bill Burgess is buried in Demeritt Cemetery, West Peru, Maine.

References

Anonymous. 1923. White Plymouth rock capons, fishing tackle and fly dope – W. H. Burgess, Minot Corner, expert poultryman “Bill” Burgess, registered guide, maker of fishing tackle, fly dope, and other things. *Lewiston Daily Sun*, page 2 (December 22).

Anonymous. 1924. Bill’s “fly” factory at Minot Corner, *Lewiston Evening Journal*, page 2 (February 16). [Includes a great running-head illustration of “A Few of Bill’s Best Flies.”].

Anonymous. 1967. Well-known Poland sports figure dies at Lewiston, *Lewiston Daily Sun*, page 2 (January 16). [This obituary was also published the same day on page 2 in the *Lewiston Evening Journal*. Both obituaries included the photograph of Burgess when an older man; see end of Gallery below.].

Conner, Sam E. 1924. Dry fly fishing is pretty work, but it’s the wet flies that catch the most fish, is the opinion of Bill Burgess, *Lewiston Evening Journal*, page 1 (February 12). [This interview of W. H. “Bill” Burgess included a photograph as Burgess when a young man; see end of Gallery below.]

A Gallery of Wm. H. “Bill” Burgess’ State-O-Maine Fishing Tackle



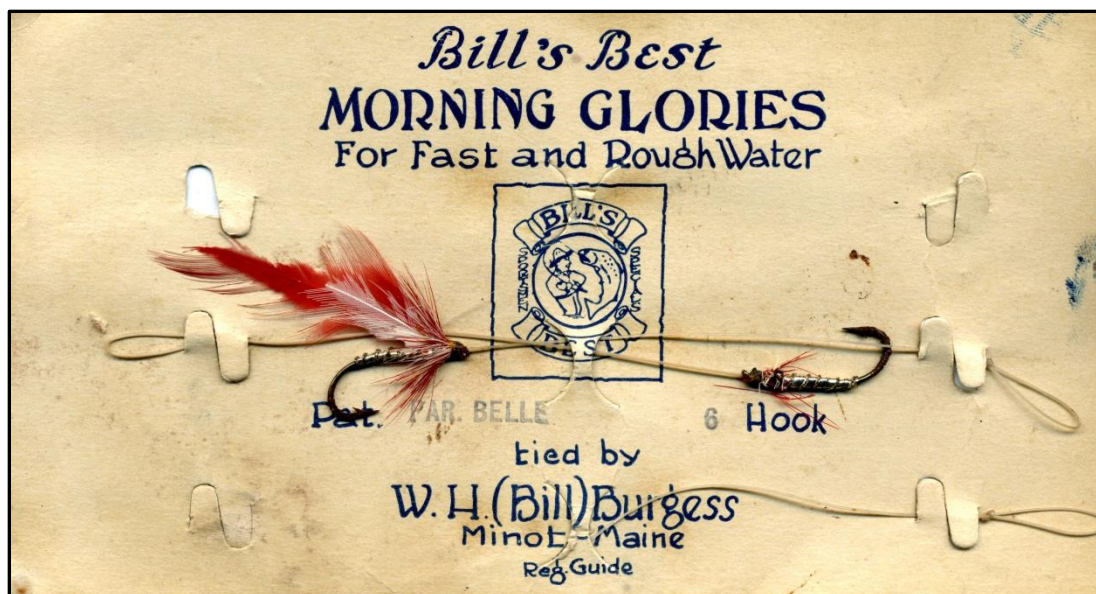
Author's collection.

Bill Burgess' flies and some of his other fishing tackle came in three grades. These were labeled as shown above, and his highest to lowest grades were Bill's Best (left side), Bill's Komped (middle), and Bill's Nocabout (lower right). Burgess wrote of his lowest grade: "Although they are low priced, there is nothing cheap about them."

Minot Corner, Maine May 16/1925			
W. H. BURGESS MARINE MOTORS AND SPORTSMEN'S SPECIALS			
EVINRUDE STERLING SCRIPPS DOMAN GRAY		CLAY RED WING FRISBY UNIVERSAL	
TERMS:			
1 ✓ Doz. Bill's Best Fly Dope	@	2 25	2 25
1 ✓ " E.L.B.F. Dope	@	2 25	2 25
			4 50 23 <hr/> 4 27
5% 10-30 NET			

Courtesy of Graydon Hilyard.

The above invoice, dated 16 May 1925, shows that Bill Burgess was selling boat motors only three years after moving from Rumford to Minot Corner, Maine. No evidence was found, however, showing that boat motors were a major part of Burgess' long-term business activities.



Author's collection.

One of Bill's Best was his Morning Glory wet flies, designed "For Fast and Rough Water." Burgess, when a young guide, made flies for his clients and soon made a wide variety of flies that became the initial foundation for his tackle business. The above card is 6 $\frac{3}{4}$ X 3 $\frac{1}{2}$ inches.

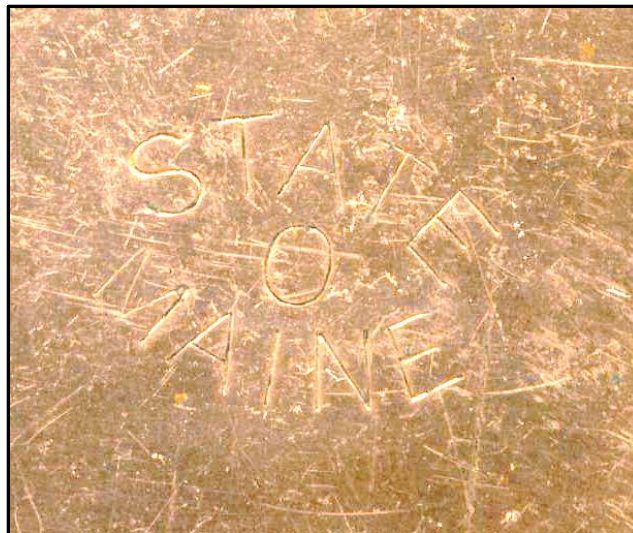


Author's collection.

Above are two examples of Burgess's low-end flies, the Nocabout Brand. The demand for Burgess flies and lures was so high that in some years he employed up to a dozen women who were trained by Burgess and then worked out of their own homes. The above cards measure 5 $\frac{1}{2}$ X 1 $\frac{1}{4}$ inches.

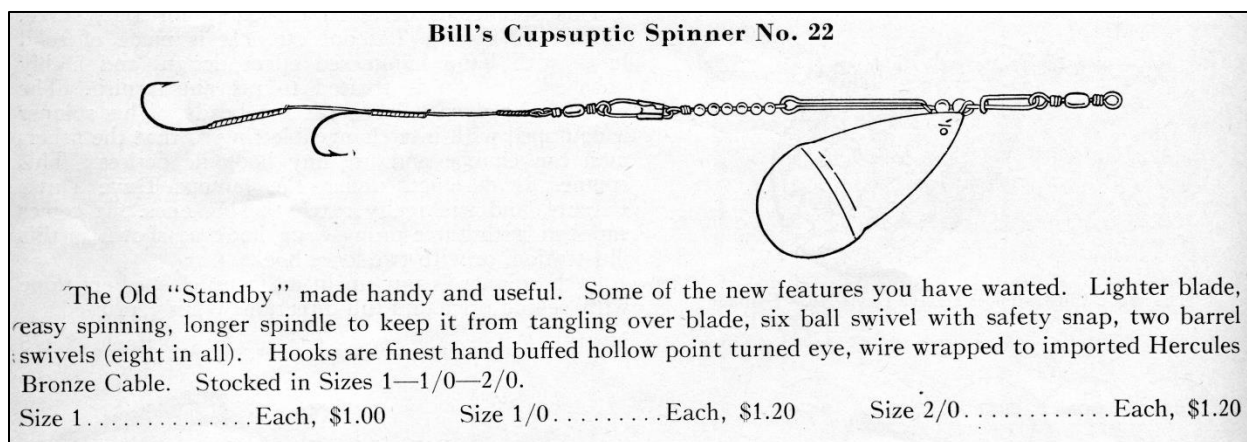


Author's collection.



Author's collection.

Burgess trolling spoons are similar to Morse's Lake Auburn Trolling Spoon and were made in a number of models, including Bill's Salmo-Combo (a.k.a. Bill's Combo, Bill's Salmo) as well as the State-O-Maine, shown above. Burgess's State-O-Maine Trolling Spoon that came in three sizes (top illustration; the largest blade is 4 inches long) and are lightly stamped with the model type on the bottom part of the blade. Blades of Burgess trolling lures must be closely examined for correct identification (bottom illustration).

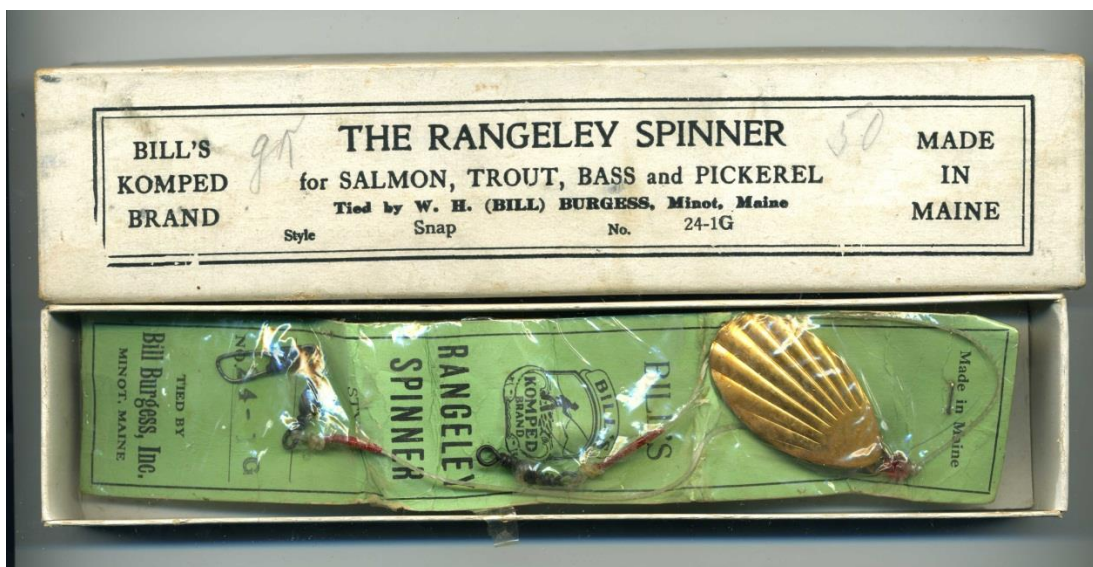


From T. B. Davis (~ 1930: 66; author's collection).



Courtesy of Jeff Knapp.

In addition to his own spinners, Burgess produced the Cupsuptic and Rangeley spinners invented by Henry O. Stanley. The upper illustration is Burgess' Cupsuptic Spinner and the lower illustration is one of the great many types of Rangeley Spinners he made. Burgess made his Rangeley Spinners in two grade (i.e., Bill's Best & Komped Brand), and they were not stamped with Burgess' name so must be found on cards or boxes to be positively identified. The above box is 5 ¾ X 1 ¾ X 5/8 inches.



Author's collection.

Spinners and other baits found in boxes are always highly collectable. However, finders must be aware that tackle gets moved around and do not assume that the lure in a box is always the original. In the above case, the information on the box label and on the card show is consistent (i.e., both are “Snap” and a “24-1G” [meaning a size 4 blade -1 spinner with a single gold blade; a Burgess 3GG means 3 spinners, each with 2 gold blades]).

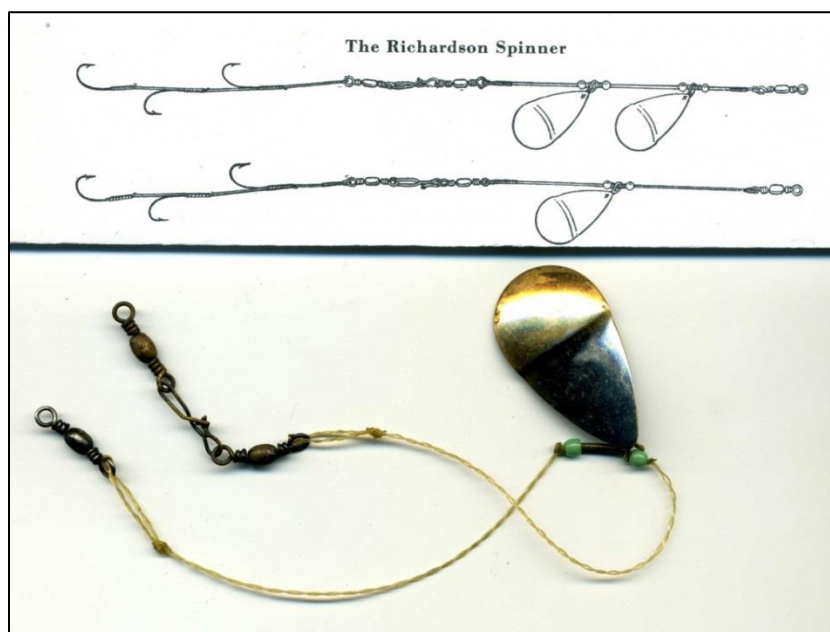


Author's collection.

The above is an example of the spinner not matching the box. While the “Tandem Hooks” is correct as is the blade size 4 (i.e., No. 24), the box label is showing that the box should contain 3 spinners each with a single silver blade. Instead, the box has one spinner with a single gold blade (i.e., 3S). A single red and blue bead is characteristic (but not diagnostic) of a Burgess Rangeley Spinner.



Author's collection.

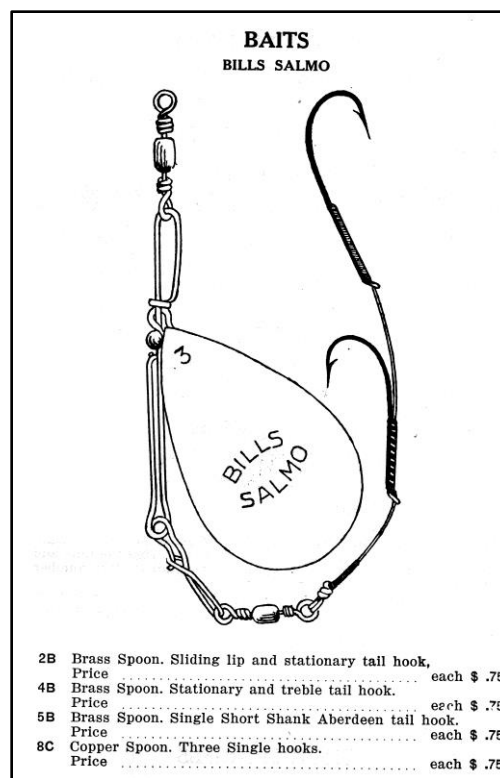


Both middle and lower illustrations from author's collection. Middle illustration from Davis (1930: 64; author's collection).

Burgess created a number of fishing spinners. Shown above is one example, his Richardson Lake Spinner. The upper picture apparently shows an early version (note that hooks are attached directly to the spinner's leader) while the lower picture is of a later version of this spinner (note the extra swivels between the lower end of the spinner's leader and the hooks). The above box measures 6 X 1 ¼ X 5/8 inches.



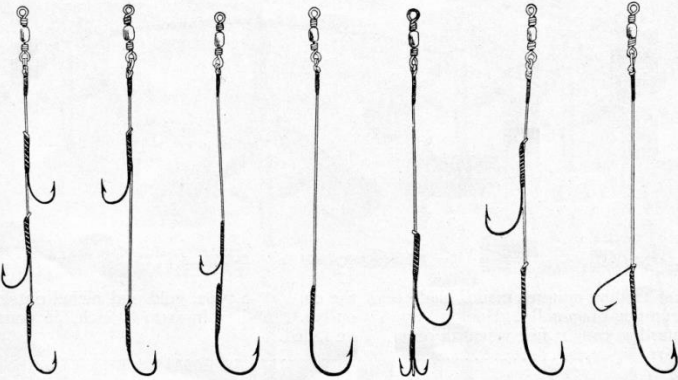
Courtesy of Dan Leroux.



Author's collection.

Bill's Salmo-Combo bait (photograph on left) was very similar to the State-O-Maine (page 54), but was flatter and had a welded (versus not welded) loop attaching the blade to the shaft. The Salmo-Combo can be found stamped either "SALMO" or "COMBO," with the former being more common, and probably more recent. This bait appears under the heading 'Bill's "Salmo-Combo"' as Bill's Combo in the ~ 1930 T. B. Davis Catalog, as Bill's Combo in the Burgess' Catalog, and as Bill's Salmo in the 1930 and 1936 Edwards and Walker catalogs (illustration on right above). In my experience, Bill's Salmo is the more common of the two. Bill's Salmo was made with either a brass or copper blade, and the copper blades come both with and without the lead coating coat on back side.

Bill's Combo Hooks, No. 72




72-2 72-3 72-4 72-5 72-6 72-7 72-8

A strictly State of Maine product and an assortment that will handle any bait or fish. Wire wrapped hand pointed, 35 pound test tripled twisted Gut. Something better.

Nos.	72/2	72/3	72/4	72/5	72/6	72/7	72/8
Each	\$.25	\$.25	\$.25	\$.25	\$.25	\$.25	\$.25

Bill's Auxiliary Hooks



A handy little hook for your tackle box.

No. 73 Each, \$.25

(64)

Author's collection.

Burgess made a great variety of hooks, ranging from single, snelled hooks to “combo hooks” designed to be attached to his spinners. As shown above, Burgess’ Combo Hooks came in various configurations, for easy use on many of his spinners. This illustration is from a T. B. Davis Arms Company Catalog (~1930, page 64).

SIX BALL SWIVELS

The Six Ball Swivel is without doubt the best swivel ever made. Do not confuse this with the Brass one that came out some years ago, although they were on the right track, but instead of the special Nickel metal we use, they used a thin Brass same as the Electric Light pull. We have statements from Old Bait Casters that claim No. 61S, which they tie on the end of the line, eliminates from 50 to 75 percent of their backlash, because there is no chance of a kink in the line, which is about all that causes an "Old

Timer" to catch a snarl. It only takes a few twists in a line to roll one strand over the other in the Cast as the Reel travels so fast that the outside strands are all alive which makes it very easy for a slight twist to get in its work and cause a lot of cussing that can be doctored by a Six Ball Swivel.

The heavy Nickel Plate on these swivels is as good an attractor as some spoon blades and they also will keep bright while exposed to light and handling. Packed one dozen of a size on perforated Counter Card [see preceeding page] one gross in box.

This cut is exact size.



61



61S



61DS



62



62S




62DS

No. 61	.....	\$ .15
No. 61S	.....	.20
No. 61DS	.....	.25
No. 62	.....	.20
No. 62S	.....	.25
No. 62DS	.....	.30

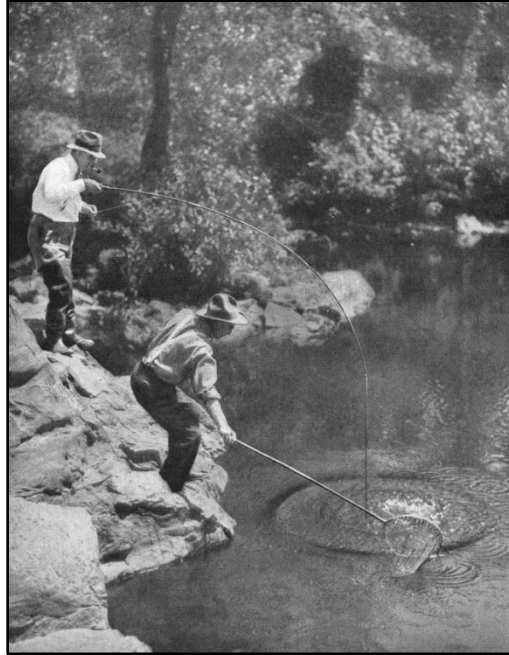
From Burgess Catalog (Courtesy of Dan Leroux).

Burgess made and sold some "accessories," including grease for water-proofing boots, bug dope in liquid and paste forms, and swivels to prevent the twisting of fishing lines. Burgess must have been especially proud of his swivels as they are specifically mentioned in his obituary.

		BILL BURGESS INC. MANUFACTURER OF Real State-o-Maine Fishing Tackle		SNELL HOOKS FLIES BAITS SPINNERS LEADERS FLY DOPE ETC.	
		MINOT CORNER, MAINE, <u>6/3/32</u> 19			
Sold to <u>Herbert L. Welch,</u>		Your Order No. _____			
Ship to <u>Haines Landing, Maine</u>		Invoice No. <u>2529</u>			
Shipped via <u>P.P.</u>		Terms <u>2 1/2</u> 10-30 net			
✓ 2 Gross Long Lake Snelled Hooks No.3/0		6.75	13 50 150 874 260 990 <hr/> 3624 193 <hr/> 3431	70¢	

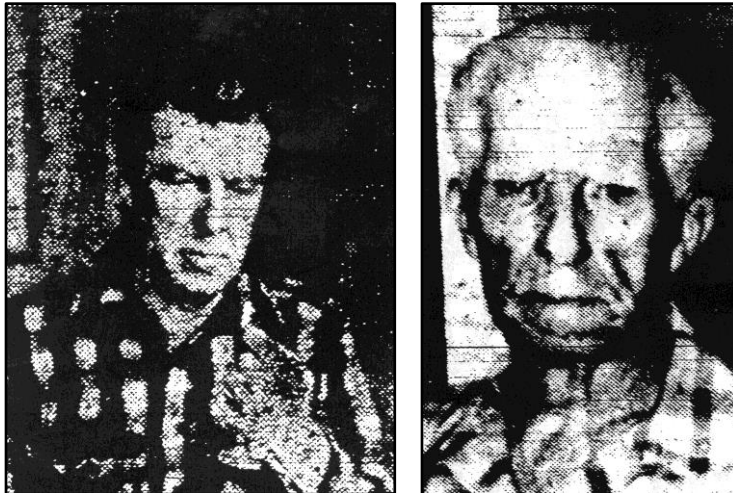
Courtesy of Graydon Hilyard.

State-O-Maine Fishing Tackle was sold through Bill Burgess' own store in Minot as well by other retailers throughout central and western Maine. The above invoice is addressed to Herbert L. Welch who owned a sporting goods store in Haines Landing, Rangeley Lakes Region of western Maine. Welch was a professional taxidermist, fly tier, and an avid angler. Welch also invented the Welch Rarebit (not rabbit), that Burgess made and sold as part of Bill's Morning Glory series.



From *Outdoor Life* (Author's collection).

Bill Burgess nets a fish for a “sport” on Maine’s Androscoggin River. In addition to being a guide and tackle maker, Burgess enjoyed fishing and bird hunting. He raised and trained his own bird dogs and was one of the first, if not the first, to raise and introduce pheasants into Maine. The above photograph was published as a full-page illustration in the August 1934 issue of *Outdoor Life*, a national sporting magazine.



Bill Burgess as he appeared in two Lewiston, Maine newspapers. In the photograph on the left, printed in 1924, Burgess is examining one of his fishing flies. The other photograph was published with Burgess’ 1967 obituary (see References above).

**RICHARD WILLIAM MURRAY (1897-1969)
and JOHN LEE MURRAY (1899-1963)
Auburn, Maine**



Author's collection.

Richard W. "Dick" Murray and John Lee "Peako" Murray were the sons of William O. and Mary Hartry Murray (a.k.a. Murry). Richard was born in Randolph, Maine on September 26, 1897. John Lee was born almost two years later on August 2, 1899, also in Randolph. While both brothers were children, the family moved to Auburn where the brothers attended local schools and graduated from Edward Little High School. John Lee went on to attend Northeastern and Boston universities.

Richard William Murray was a manager for an A & P grocery store in Auburn for at least

three years, starting in 1930. In 1934-35, Richard and his younger brother, John Lee Murray, founded the Murray Bait Company. At the time, both men were in their thirties and living with their parents at 23 Hillsdale Street, Auburn. According to *Manning's Lewiston and Auburn Directory*, their company was located at 17 Fairmont Avenue, six or so blocks southeast of Hillsdale in the main part of Auburn, where the brothers resided. Two years later, Richard married and became the company's sole proprietor. John left Murray Bait Company and became a salesperson for Wells Sporting Goods Company in Auburn. The new address for Murray Bait Company was 63 Washington Street. Richard owned and operated the company until 1943, when failing health forced him to do less stressful work and he became a clerical worker. After 1944, the Murray Bait Company is no longer listed in *Manning's*.

In 1947 or shortly before, the company was revived by John Lee Murray. John, now 48 or so years old, brought in Harold G. Parker (1898-1973) as a new partner, and the company's name was changed to J. Lee Murray Company. The company was listed in the Auburn Business section of *Manning's* as "Fishing Tackle and Rod Mfgs," located at 14 Main Street in Auburn. J. Lee Murray Company is listed in the 1951 *Manning's*, but from 1953 on the company does not appear in this directory. In 1953, J. Lee Murray is shown in *Manning's* as employed in Bath, Maine with a house on 538 Main Street, Lewiston. Around this time Harold G. Parker became the Company's General Manager, running the day-to-day activities while still employed as a foreman at a local shoe factory. In 1955 or 1956, the J. Lee Murray Fishing Tackle moved from 14 Main Street to Parker's home at 93 Gamage Avenue in Auburn. When John Lee Murray died

in the spring of 1969, Parker continued to operate the Company out of his Gamage Avenue home while also working full-time in shoe manufacturing. The J. Lee Murray Company ceased it's Auburn operations in 1967 or 1968. Harold G. Parker died in the fall of 1973, with his obituary listing his occupation listed as a long-time foreman at Charles Cushman Company (Auburn) and Commonwealth Shoe and Leather Company (Lewiston).

After the mid-1970s, carded spinners made by J. Lee Murray Company have addresses from both Lisbon Falls and Arundel, Maine (see Gallery of Photographs below). The last tackle company to produce Murray spinners was the Murray Company of Rochester, New York. There motto was "The Original J. Lee Murray Spoon Company."

On the earliest lures made by the Murray Bait Company was Murray's Aluminum Minnow, patented in 1910 by William Richard Murray (1870-1933), the brothers' father. Information about William's life, and his artificial minnow, was published by Krohn (2015). It's unclear when this lure ceased to be made but Murray brother tackle catalog, circa 1950, does not include the aluminum minnow. In a letter dated October 1, 1957, Harold G. Parker responded to a request for a supply of these lures. His opening sentences: "We regret to say that the aluminum minnow has been out of production with us for many years. The dies for the same were purchased by H. A. Whitmore & Co., Inc. 301 Congress St., Boston. Possible they can supply the lure." Parker went on to explain that the company was "developing a new jointed wobbler which the tests have shown to have a very remarkable action. In fact we know of no wobbler which has the same life like action." While I am unaware of any jointed wobbler ever produced by J. Lee

Murray Company, collectors today can find two versions of the Murray Aluminum Minnow. The first lure is stamped on the lower left fin "PAT'D," whereas the second version looks identical but lacks the stamping. Could the first version be a genuine Murray whereas the second version was made by H. A. Whitmore & Company? Only additional research yielding relevant documentation can answer this question.

John Lee worked the year or so prior to his death in 1963 as an athletic trainer at Bates College in Lewiston, Maine. Richard W. Murray, after retiring and for a few years until his death six years after his brother, wrote poems and historical articles. In the 1960s, Dick Murray (his pen name) published more than a dozen history related articles in the *Lewiston Evening Journal Magazine Section*. Many of these articles were lengthy and used as the leads on page one of this weekly newspaper. One of Richard's poems (kindly provided by his son, James), written in the mid- to late-1940s when living on Turner Street in Auburn:

WEEK-END PLEASURE

When Friday comes my week is done
Presenting wishful wishing;
I shirk the chores around the house
My mind is full of fishing.

I make a break out to the lake
And if it looks inviting,
I rig a rod with feathered lure
To tempt the bass in biting.

But if I pass a placid pond
And see a salmon rolling,
I hustle 'round to find a boat
And try a bit of trolling.

Or maybe I will fish a brook
With fancy fly or spinner;
And with the hope of average luck
To catch a trout for dinner.

And whether luck is good or bad
On week-ends spent at trouting,
Regardless of the fish I catch,
I've had a splendid outing.

After retiring, Richard also returned to making lures on a small-scale and produced Rangeley Spinners, June Bug Spinners, small trout spinners, and mackerel rigs at his home on Summer Street (see "Dick Murray's Improved Gold Rangeley Spinner" in Gallery of Photographs).

An advertisement in the back of the March 1949 (page 56) issue of *Popular Mechanics* magazine reads: "SEND A dime for "flashy" trout, perch or crappie spinner and catalog. Murray's, Auburn, Maine." The only catalog I have seen for Murray's fishing tackle includes photographs of the interior and exterior of the company's building in Auburn, as well as the company's pick-up truck (see Gallery of Photographs). This catalog lists a page and a half of lures that Murray made and sold: Three Spoon Attractors (2 sizes with brass, copper, chromium, or hammered brass blades), Trolling Spoons (4 sizes), Trolling Double Spinners (5 varieties, 2 sizes and various blade types), Pearl Brook-Trout Spinners (1 size), Pearl Kidney Trolling Spinner (2 sizes), Pearly Wobbler (4 varieties), Red and White Wobbler (2 sizes), Flashy Spinner (1 size), Duo-Min [willow-leaf] Spinner (cooper blades only, 1 size), Gold-Flute Spinner 4 blade types), Rangeley Spinner (4 varieties), and Aluminum Dorsal-Fin Rudder (1 size). In addition to their own line of lures, the catalog shows that Murray's Tackle Shop sold a variety of lures and

fishing tackle from many other manufacturers including Bristol, Heddon, Helin, Lowe, Penn, Percy, Pflueger, and South Bend.

Despite decades of work devoted to lure making, neither the obituaries of John Murray nor Harold Parker mention their involvement in the fishing tackle industry. Richard Murray's obituary does, however, show him proudly holding a freshly caught fish and states that "For many years he operated a fishing tackle business known throughout the state." His obituary also noted that "He was well-known as a writer of local history items and as a Journal magazine writer."

Shortly after Richard's death in the spring of 1969, Ralph B. Skinner read a tribute he wrote to Dick Murray on Lewiston-Auburn's WLAM radio station. Skinner and Murray were boyhood friends when the Murrays lived on Minot Avenue and later in Auburn's Goff Hill neighborhood. Of those years, according to Skinner, Richard "wrote many happily nostalgic stories." Skinner started his tribute by noting that after his retirement, and with failing health that did not "impair the good nature of his works," He went on to state that "Dick's writings reflected his personality. They not only recalled the past in historical fact, but were rich in human interest and in their recollections of the rollicking days of boyhood. He will be greatly missed."

Of the fishing tackle business, Skinner said: "Dick also kept up an extensive business in the manufacture and sale of fishing lures, which he had first engaged in with his father and his brother, Lee, well known in sporting circles, who passed away a few years ago. This undertaking

grew out of the fact that the father, William O. Murray, was an inveterate [inveterate] and expert fisherman, knowing all the fish lures and habitats. The sons carried on in this area of activity so prominent in Maine's recreational appeal."

Today, Murray fishing lures made in Maine can be found with at least five names: Murray Bait Co., Auburn Maine; J. Lee Murray Co., Auburn, Maine; J. Lee Murray Co., Lewiston, Maine; J. Lee Murray Co., Lisbon Falls, Maine; and J. Lee Murray Co., Arundel, Maine. Arthur T. Freer of Gilbertsville, New York specialized in making and selling "old fashion" fishing Lures (e.g., G. M. Skinner spinners). Freer's five lines of classic lures encompassed "Murray's-in-Maine" spinners and spoons, including the "Aluminum Minnows For Dumb Fish." A. T. Freer operated from the 1950s until the 1970s. At some time after Freer, Murray Company of Rochester, New York was apparently created. This latter company labeled their large flashing spinners "The Original J. Lee Murray" trolling spoon. Interestingly, the Murray Company was located in same city where Charles H. Morse, Auburn's first lure maker, played minor league baseball one hundred years earlier.

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Anonymous. 1949 (est.). *MURRAY'S: Manufacturers of Fishing Tackle For Over 50 Years – Auburn, Maine*. [Author's use of this 14-page catalog courtesy of Dan Leroux.].

Anonymous. 1963. John Murray [obituary]. *Lewiston Daily Sun*, Lewiston, Maine, page 2 (September 16). [Same obituary published in the *Lewiston Evening Journal*, page 2, September 14, 1963].

Anonymous. 1969. Richard W. Murray [obituary]. *Lewiston Daily Sun*, Lewiston, Maine, page 9 (June 30). [Includes a photograph of Murray holding a fish].

Anonymous. 1973. Harold G. Parker [obituary]. *Lewiston Evening Journal*, Lewiston, Maine, page 2 (September 17).

Freer, A. T. undated. *Fish Are Fussy About Lures – So Is Arthur Freer!* Fishing Tackle Catalog published in Gilbertsville, New York. [Top half of the back cover of this 8-page catalog is devoted to “Murray’s-In-Maine” lures. Prices are shown for each item, with an Aluminum Minnow selling for 95 cents].

H. A. Manning Company. Compiler and publisher. *Manning’s Lewiston and Auburn Directory*. [Issues of 1930 through 1968 were searched, but not every year was available, although most were.].

Krohn, W. B. 2015. Murray’s Aluminum Minnow: Maine’s answer to England’s phantom minnow. *The National Fishing Lure Collectors Club Magazine*, 25 (1): 29-33 (Summer Issue).

Parker, H. G. 1957. Letter from J. Lee Murray Company to Mr. H. Walton, Wilmington, Delaware. (October 1). [Copy of this letter courtesy of Dan Leroux].

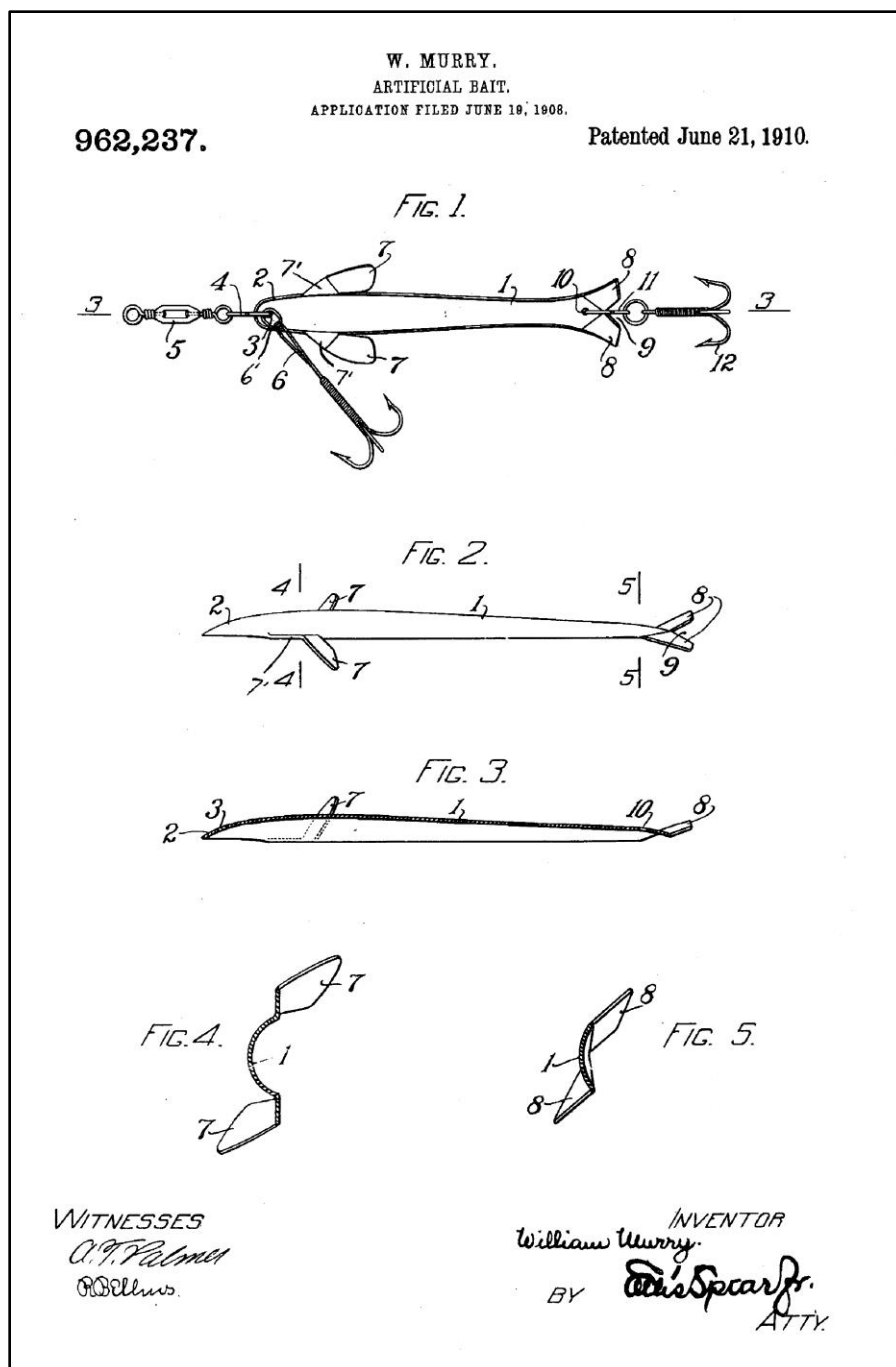
Skinner, R. B. 1969. Tribute to Dick Murray. Typed copy of the tribute read on WLAM radio, Lewiston-Auburn Broadcasting Corporation. (June 30). [Copy of this tribute given to the author courtesy of Jim Murray.].

**Gallery of Fishing Lures
Made by the Murray Bait Company and
the J. Lee Murray Company**



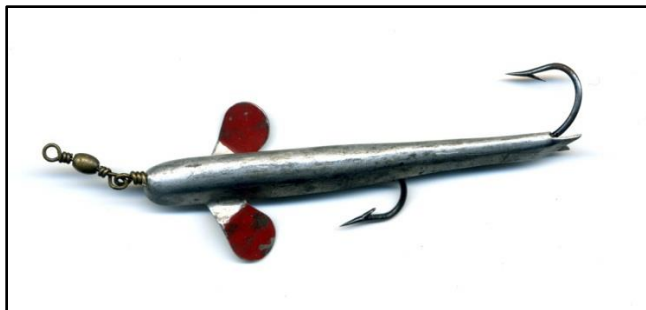
Courtesy of Ron Goddard.

Murray's Aluminum Minnow was one of earliest lures to be sold by the Murray Bait Company. This lure is similar in appearance to an earlier English lure made to imitate small forage fish, the Phantom Artificial Minnow. The Phantom's body was made of silk whereas Murray's Minnow was more durable, being all metal. The above box measures 5 5/8 X 1 3/4 X 3/4 inches.

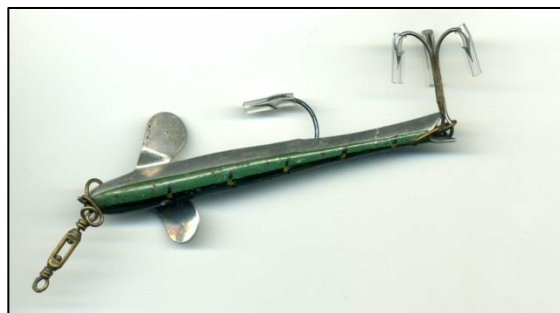


From U.S. Patent Office web site.

Drawing for Murray's Aluminum Minnow that was published with the final patent notice on file in the U.S. Patent Office, Washington, D.C. The application took almost two years to be approved, and was held by William Murry (note spelling at the top of the drawing), father of the Murray brothers.



Courtesy of Ron Goddard.



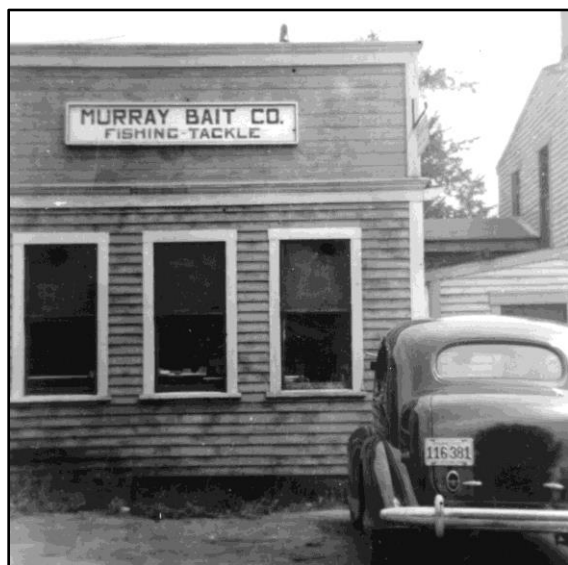
Author's collection.

As shown above, the Murray's Aluminum Minnow can be found with either a box (upper photograph) or barrel (lower) swivels, and a rear treble or single hook. Of special interest to collectors, this lure can be found in a variety of painted colors. The Minnow came in only one size, being about 3 1/2 inches long. The lure is marked on the lower left fin "PAT'D," meaning "patented" (On page 272 of his 2000 book, *19th Century Fishing Lures – A Collector's Guide to U.S. Lures Manufactured Prior to 1901*, A. Carter wrongly identified this mark as "Patent Pend").



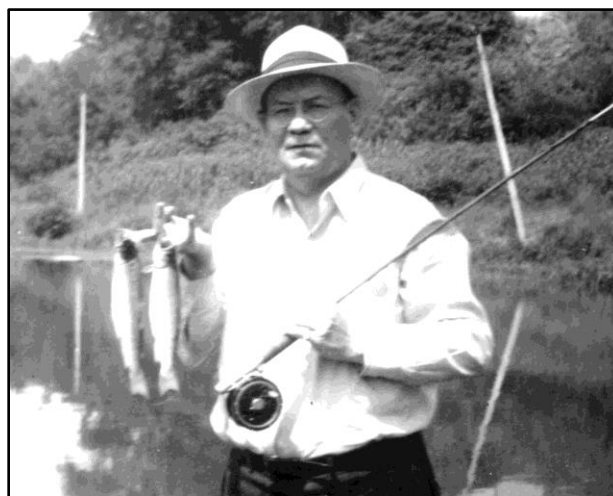
Courtesy of Ron Goddard.

The body of the above lure is made of hard plastic and the lip made of copper. The underside of the lip clearly shows (enlargement top, center) that this plug was made by Murray Bait Company, Auburn, Maine. According to James R. Murray (Richard W. Murray's son), this was an experimental lure that never went into full production. Thus, "Murray's Unnamed Lure" (author's name) is extremely rare.



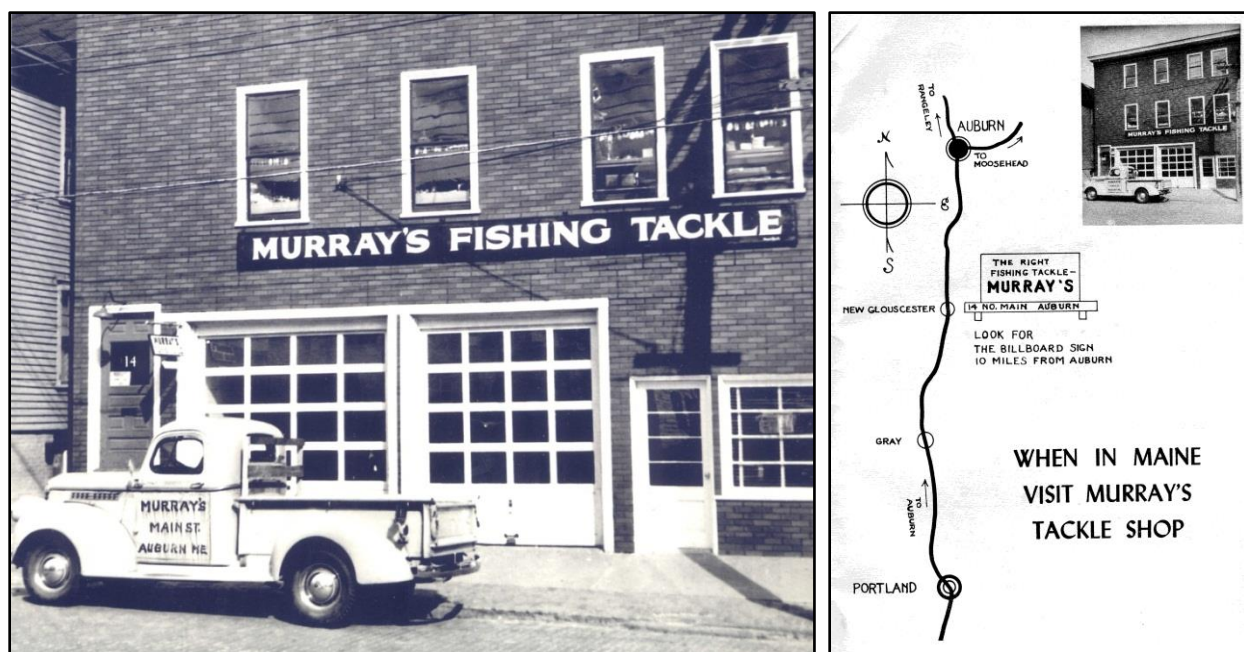
Courtesy of Jim Murray.

Murray Bait Company, shown above in early photographs, was located at 63 Washington Avenue in Auburn from 1939 through 1943. Today, this site is the location of the New England School of Metal Work.



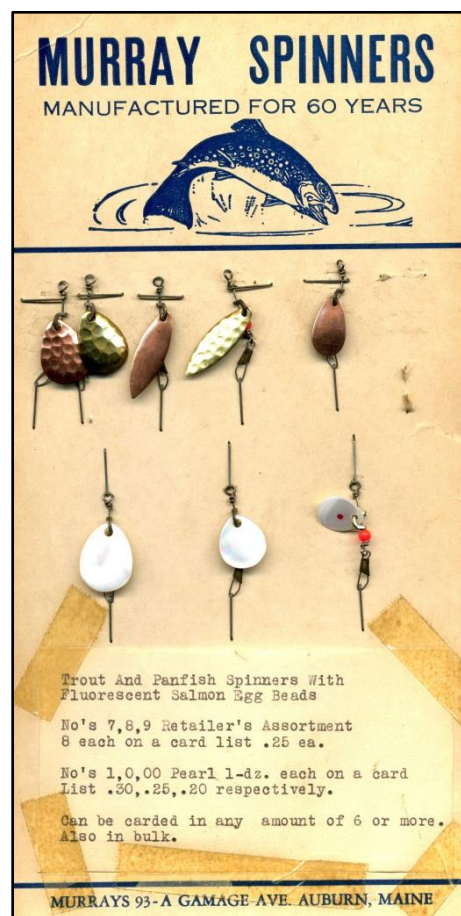
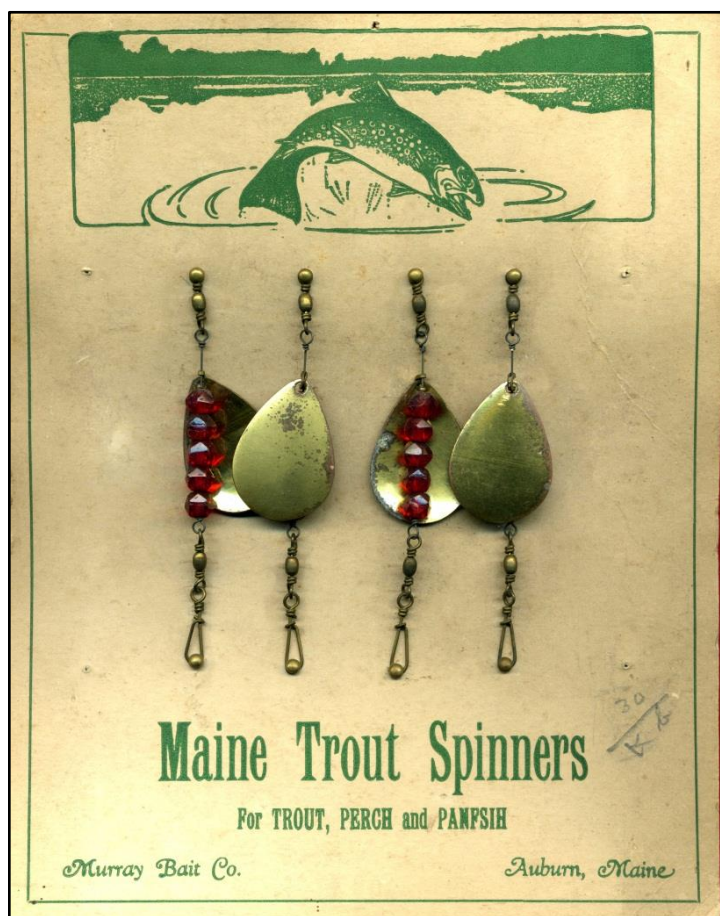
Courtesy of Jim Murray.

In the photograph on left, John Lee “Peako” Murray (left front), Richard W. “Dick” Murray (right front), and two friends on a successful fishing trip in May 1938 at Moosehead Lake, Maine. Dick Murray is in the photograph on the right holding two brook trout caught during August 1946 in Pettingill Park, Auburn, Maine. The Murray brother’s father, William Murray, was also an avid angler.



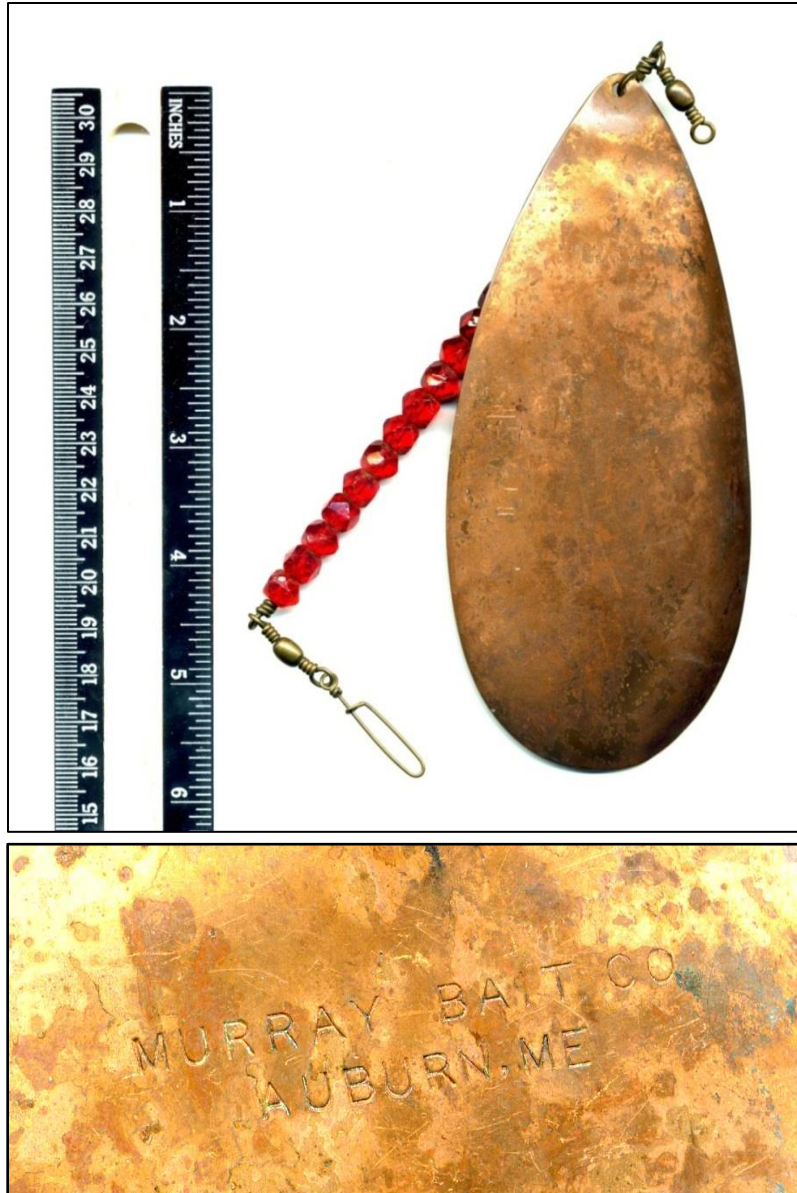
Left: courtesy of Jim Murray; right: courtesy of Dan Leroux.

Photograph of the Murray Fishing Tackle (a.k.a., J. Lee Murray Co.) building on 14 Main Street, Auburn. Today, this site is near the location of the Hilton Garden Inn, north of the Court Street bridge. Both the photograph (left) and the map (right) were published (circa 1949) in *MURRAY'S – Manufacturers of Fishing Tackle for Over 50 Years, Auburn, Maine*. The map does not show I-95, and because the Portland to Auburn to Augusta section of I-95 was not completed until 1955, this catalog was clearly printed sometime before that year. Note that the top of the map points to the Rangeley Lakes and to Moosehead Lake, two major fishing regions in the Pine Tree State.



Courtesy of Dan Leroux.

On the left is a spinner display card (to go on a counter or wall of a retail store) from Murray Bait Company. This company was owned and operated by Richard W. Murray and J. Lee Murray from 1935 to 1944. The card on the right is a sales representative's card that would have been used to sell products to retail stores. This card is from J. Lee Murray Company, owned by John Lee Murray and Harold G. Parker. This company operated in Auburn from around 1947 to 1967-68. In the early years, J. Lee Murray Company operated from a store on 14 Main Street (see above) and around 1955 until Auburn operations ceased in the late 1960s, the company was located in Parker's home at 93 Gamage Avenue (note address on bottom of card on the right). The dimensions of these cards are 6 ¼ X 7 ¾ inches (left card) and 5 X 10 inches (card on right).



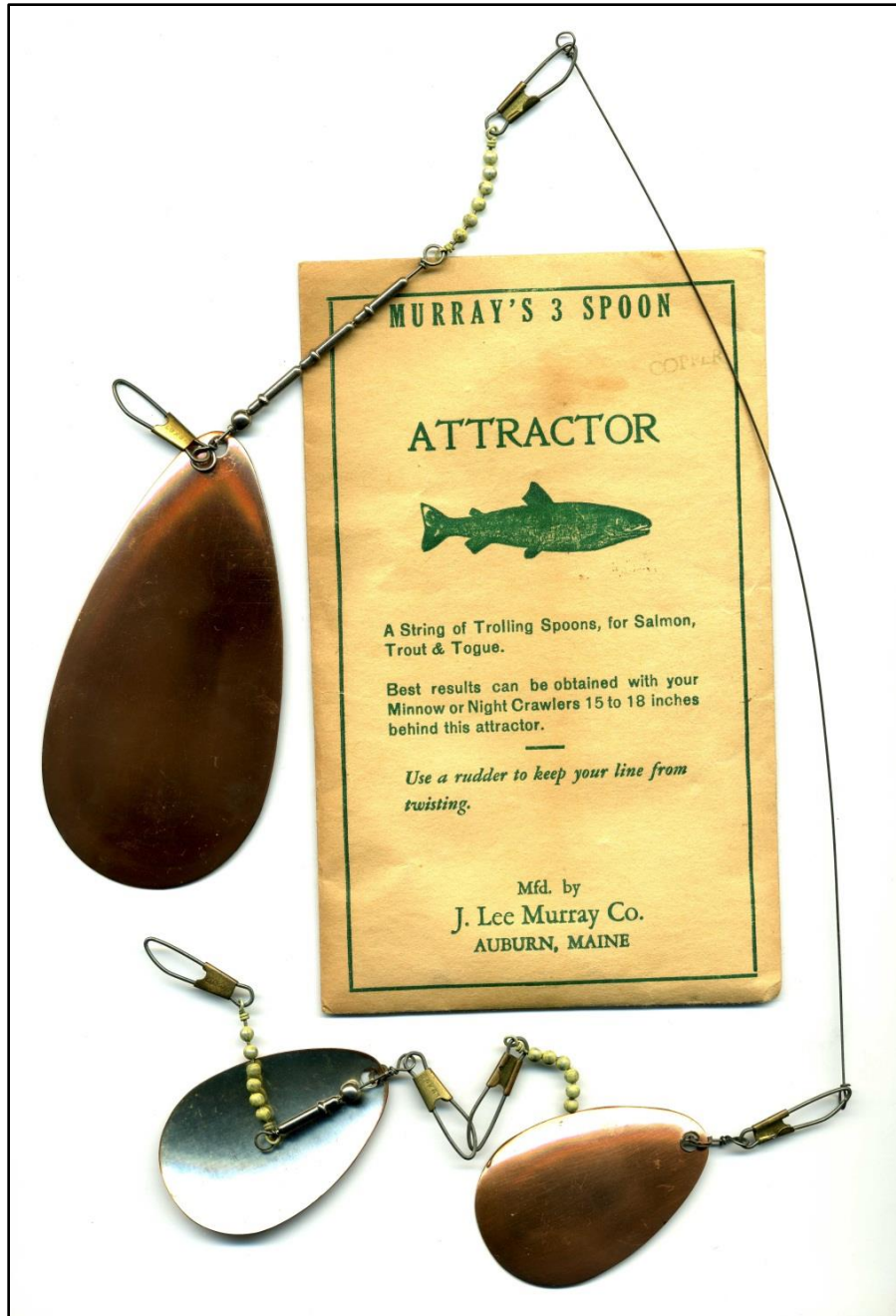
Author's collection.

Copper trolling spoons were, along with the Aluminum Minnow, among the earliest of the Murray Bait Company lures (upper illustration). These spoons were similar to those made by C. H. Morse (i.e., both made of cooper and bottom side of both spoons were lead-lined), but lacked the glass beads and long shaft characteristic of Morse's spoons. While the above spoon is stamped on the lower part of the blade's upper side (lower illustration), other trolling spoons made by the Murray Bait Company are stamped on the bottom or middle part of the blade.



Courtesy of Ron Goddard.

The Murray Bait Company's version of the Stanley Rangeley Spinner. This is a double-bladed Rangeley, gold and nickel, with a leader made of twisted gut. The Murray brothers also made a single blade Rangeley Spinner, and later versions of the Rangeley had steel leaders, and retained the detachable hook feature on the spinner's lower end. Burgess Rangeley Spinners also had detachable hooks, as did the Bailey Spinner, whereas the Stanley and Bailey Rangeley spinners had hooks permanently attached to the leader. The above box is 6 3/8 X 1 7/8 X 5/8 inches.



Author's collection.

Trolling spoons produced by J. Lee Murray Company were not stamped. These lures can best be identified when found in unaltered condition in labeled envelopes, as shown above. But collectors must be careful: anglers move lures among packages, so always look for multiple examples before making conclusions.



Courtesy Ron Goddard.

Richard W. Murray left Murray Bait Company around 1943, went into clerical work, and retired in 1956. A few years later he was living on Summer Street and again started to make tackle. (This card, bottom left, reads: "Made By Dick Murray"). Note that this modernized Rangeley Spinner was purchased at Wells Sporting Goods Store. Wells was a long-time Auburn business where John Lee Murray, Dick's brother, worked after leaving Murray Bait Company from 1939 until he started J. Lee Murray Tackle Company approximately four years later



Author's collection.

A series of trolling spoons made by J. Lee Murray Company. The spoon on the card with the Auburn, Maine address is the oldest where the Arundel, Maine label is probably the most recent of the three spoons. Because J. Lee Murray spoons are unstamped, it's important to have examples of these spoons on unaltered cards for comparative purposes. Once the company moved from Auburn, neither of the Murray brothers were involved with the business.

**CLAYTON H. HAMILTON (1901-1994):
Life-long Sportsman and Founder of
H & J Fishing Tackle
Auburn, Maine**



Author's collection.

Clayton H. Hamilton was born on 27 June 1901 in New Gloucester, Maine. He was the son of George Henry and Carrie Florence Hubbard Hamilton. In 1920, Clayton graduated from Edward Little High School in Auburn, Maine. Five years later he married Lilian (a.k.a., Lila) Gautier and the couple had one child, Robert W. Hamilton. Clayton worked for 27 years at Hahnel Brothers Roofing and Sheet Metal Company in Lewiston, Maine. Robert also worked at Hahnel Brothers, and together father and son gained experience in working sheet metal and in roof construction. Around 1955, Clayton (53 yrs. old) and Robert (28 yrs. old) left Hahnel Brothers to form Hamilton and Son, Inc. With the years going by, now was the time for Clayton to strike-out and start his second business. Hamilton & Son, Inc. was a sheet metal fabrication and roofing company with Clayton as the Company's President and Robert as the Vice President. Early on

the company was located in the north end of Auburn on Center Street, and in the early 1960s moved to Industry Avenue (off of Minot Avenue in the southwestern side of town).

As for Clayton's fishing tackle business, it may have started as early as early as 1945, but for sure by 1950 (see purchase order below). This company made and sold a variety of fishing tackle, but specialized in spinners and a jigging lure, the Leadhead. (The "Leadhead" was not, interestingly, made of lead but of a zinc alloy). At the time Clayton formed the tackle business, he was still working for Hahnel Brothers as a foreman (in *Manning's* through mid-1950s). H & J operated out of Clayton's home in North Auburn. When orders for H & J tackle backed-up, Clayton enlisted the help of family and friends to assemble, pack, and ship lures. At these times, Lila paid the helpers, as the family says, with "pastries and dinners." In the early to mid-1960s, desiring to have more time for fishing and other outdoor sports, Hamilton sold the tackle business to North Bay Spinner Company in Northboro, Massachusetts. North Bay made and sold 19 lures under the H & J label, including an ice-fishing jig named the "Clayt Hamilton."

Clayton Hamilton was an active sportsman from his young. As an adult, he owned a hunting camp in Costigan, Maine, on the east side of the Penobscot River north of Old Town, Maine. In the 1930s and 1940s this area had many abandoned farms, providing excellent habitat for deer, grouse, and woodcock. Hamilton liked to go to his camp in November for deer hunting. He did not, however, limited his sporting activities to Maine. According to one newspaper article, Hamilton and a friend, Richard F. Parker, spent a month hunting elk in Montana during 1963. They saw 41 elk and manage to shoot one. While Clayton made mostly trolling spinners, he also

loved to fly fish. To quote from a 1951 article in the *Lewiston Evening Journal*:

Clayton Hamilton of North Auburn, had a time for himself up at The Forks [on the Kennebec River]. Speckled beauties were rising nicely to dry flies, and he came back with his limit. Clay found out early that the smaller the flies the better. The trout would snap at a lure on a No. 20 hook and disdain the same offering on a No. 12. Who says fish aren't fussy?

After selling H & J in the early to mid-1960s, Clayton Hamilton spent more time hunting, fishing, and trapping. Robert continued to run the family sheet metal business, retiring in 1980 due to ill health. Robert, like his father, enjoyed outdoor sports, especially fly-fishing.

During his retirement years Clayton Hamilton owned a number of fishing/hunting camps. In an article written in 1987 by long-time friend and outdoor writer Gene Letourneau, Hamilton had a camp at Quimby Pond in the Rangeley Lakes Region, a trailer on the north side at the mouth of the Moose River on Moosehead Lake, and a larger camp next to the Deer Head Farm on the east shore of Moosehead Lake northeast of Mount Kineo. This later camp had a sign on the over the front porch proclaiming: "H & J Fishing Tackle." Clayton enjoyed many types of fresh and salt water fishing, but was especially fond of catching trophy lake trout (a.k.a., togue) at Moosehead Lake. According to Letourneau's 1987 article:

He [Clayton Hamilton] and his companions took a string of togue in the 1960 winter season that included two 13-pounders, one each of 18 and 19 pounds, two 20-pounders, and one of 24 lbs. In may never be matched.

In the two or so decades that H & J Fishing Tackle existed in Maine, they created a large amount and variety of trolling spoons and spinners, leaders, and trolling keels (both aluminum and lead). Lure names include the Belgrade Spinner, Sebago Twins (a double-bladed spinner),

and Trout Spoon. According to printing on the cards these spinners come on, one could buy blades with a pearly fish scale, hammered brass, copper & brass, copper, tin – copper, brass, and chrome. H & J Diamond Series consisted of, from smallest to largest, The Jack of Diamonds, Queen of Diamonds, and the King of Diamonds. They also made the Duck Cove Wobbler, a heavy spoon that was most commonly either copper or nickel finished. Less common, is a Duck Cove Wobbler stamped “H & J” or one with it’s underside painted in bright red.

H & J was especially well known for their Leadfish (really a zinc-fish). These later lures where shaped like little fish, silver or gold in color, and were used for jigging with a larger variety designed for casting (simply called Cast Baits). Clayton did not make the Leadfish himself but instead they were manufactured for H & J by Down-East Sportscraft, Inc. (a.k.a., Peterson’s Machine Shop). Fred Peterson, second generation owner of the shop, remembers the day when Clayton Hamilton came into his father’s shop with live minnow. Fred’s father, Fritz, and Clayton sat down and traced the little fish, still wet, so that they had the proper shape, locations of the fins, and so on. The drawing was used in making the die-casts from which Leadfish were, and still are, molded. Now in it’s third generation of Peterson ownership, this company is best known today as the maker of the Down-East Rod Holder. Down-East started in 1946 and continues operating out of it’s original location in Lewiston, Maine. Down-East still is makes the Leadfish, and instead of having raised “H & J” letters, today’s lures are marked “D E.” Five types of Leadfish are currently available (Demon Bait, Little Minnie, Dodging Sucker, Little Sunny, and Spinning Minnow); they come coated in nickel, gold, or copper. (For

photographs and more information, see: http://www.down-east.com/website_013.htm).

In addition to spinners and jigs, H & J also sold a variety of leaders, both with and without hooks, different lengths and breaking strengths, and some for specific types of fishing (e.g., fly fishing for Atlantic Salmon). Breaking a long running tradition of Maine lure makers, H & J did not make neither the Cupsuptic nor the Rangeley spinner. (H & J's successor in Massachusetts, however, did make the Rangeley Spinner). They were, however, the only early Maine tackle maker that made a tip-up for ice fishing.

H & J spinners and spoons can still be found mounted on cards, with many of these cards reading: "Created And Fashioned By Fishermen Who Fish." Cards in the Diamond Series of spinners read: "Happy Fishing & Joyous Results" (bolding and underlining added for emphasis), leading some to speculated that this is the source of the company's name, "H & J." However, according to Hamilton's oldest grandson, Clayton initially had a partner, Charlie Joy. Joy, who lived in Lewiston, was a salesman and drove a Hudson Hornet. Thus, the first letters of the founding partners' last name formed the company's name: H & J. Although the partnership was short-lived, Clayton continued using H & J and added "Happy Fishing & Joyous Results" as a slogan on some lure cards and in his fishing tackle catalog.

Clayton fished, hunted, and trapped into his late 80s; he shot his last buck on the shore of Moosehead Lake when approaching his 80th year. In June of 1994, after a long illness, Clayton died at his home on North Auburn Road. This property was his long-time residence, and is located only 1 ½ miles south of where Charles H. Morse, the father of Auburn lure making, is at

rest.

References

Anonymous. 1964. Parker reports on elk hunt. *Lewiston Evening Journal*, Lewiston, Maine, page 19 (December 4).

Anonymous. 1965. A Big Winter Thrill. *Lewiston Evening Journal*, Lewiston, Maine, page 14 (March 2). (In March of 1965, Clayton H. Hamilton took his two grandsons, Michael and Scott, ice fishing on Moosehead Lake. Article includes a photograph of Michael Hamilton holding a 14-pound lake trout he caught on this expedition.).

Anonymous. 1992. Robert W. Hamilton [obituary]. *Lewiston Sun Journal*, Lewiston, Maine, page 2 (December 11). (with photograph).

Anonymous. 1994. Clayton H. Hamilton – businessman, manufactured fishing lures [obituary]. *Portland Press Herald*, Portland, Maine (June 24, page 11B). [This obituary, with a few more details and a photograph, was published on page 2 of the *Lewiston Sun Journal*, Lewiston, Maine, on 23 June 23 1994].

H. A. Manning Company. Compiler and publisher. *Manning's Lewiston and Auburn Directory*. [Issues of 1944 through 1977 were searched; found information about the Hamilton's metal fabrication business, but no mention of H & J Fishing Tackle].

Letourneau, G. 1987. Veteran angler, 87, continues to enjoy his sport daily in the Moosehead region. *Moosehead Messenger*, Greenville, Maine (June 17, page 21). [Discusses Clayton Hamilton's love of fishing, mentions his exceptional 1960 catch of lake trout, and documentations the general locations of three camps Hamilton owned at this time].

Pendexter, F. 1951. The tackle box – fish really hitting at many Maine lakes. *Lewiston Evening Journal*, Lewiston, Maine, page 14 (May 11).

A Gallery of Fishing Lures

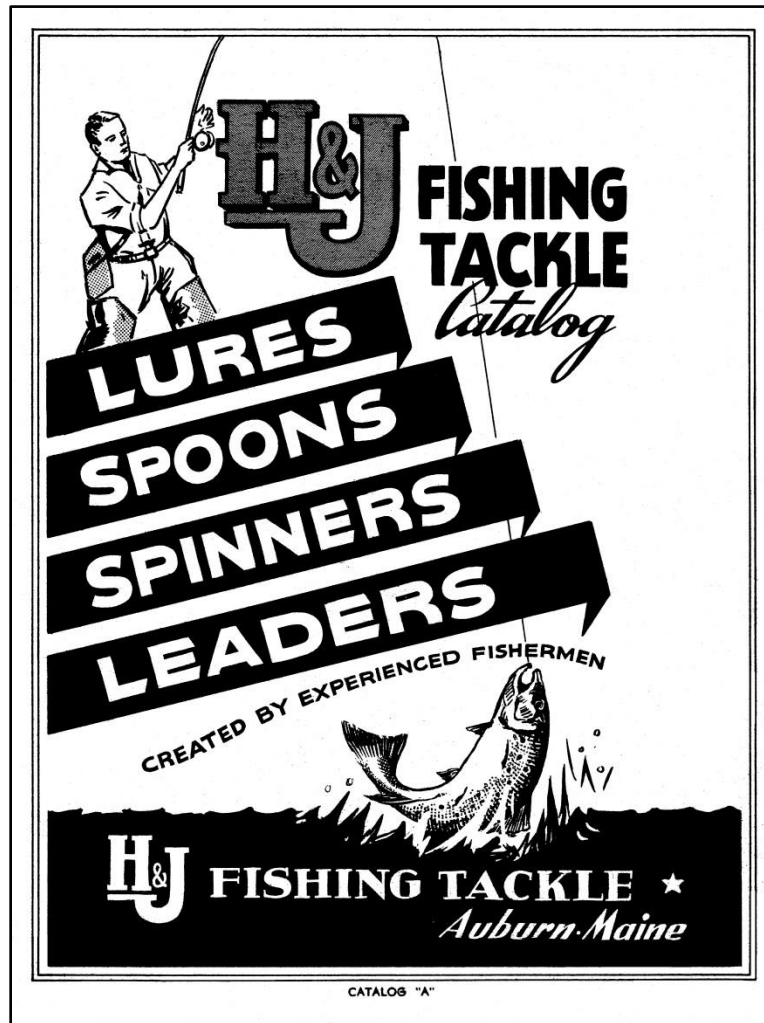
Made by H & J Fishing Tackle

Enter this Order as shown. Acknowledge receipt and deliver as specified.		PURCHASE ORDER H & J FISHING TACKLE AUBURN, MAINE XXXXXXXXXX Box 226		This number must appear on all packages, receipts and invoices. Nº 9743	
To Pequea Works		June 10, 1950 19		(1079)	
No _____		City Strasburg		State Penna.	
Quantity	Stock No.	ARTICLE	Each	Total	
5,000	3 1/2 gals	1 1/4" Lock-Fast Safety Snaps like sample enclosed		45 gals	
Please rush these .				158	
Post				57	
209					
Ship by PP & Ins.		Terms 2% 10 days	Wanted at once	All goods sent in excess of this Order will be returned.	
		Signed H&J Fishing Tackle-C. Hamilton			

WALTHAM SALESBOOK CO. WALTHAM, MASS. FORM 1585L

Author's collection.

A purchase order from H & J Fishing Tackle requesting 5,000 snaps from a Pennsylvania company that were needed "at once." At the time this order was placed in June of 1950, Clayton H. Hamilton was still working as a foreman for a metal working and roofing company in Lewiston, Maine. It was five years after this order was made that Clayton and his son, Robert, established their own metal fabrication company. H & J Fishing Tackle may have been only a part-time enterprise for Hamilton (his obituary states that he worked on tackle "in his spare time"), but based on the quality of the fishing tackle, it was work he took great pride in doing.



Courtesy of the Hamilton family.

The cover of an 8-page catalog that is heavily illustrated with high quality, black and white drawings of H & J products. Note the 'Catalog "A"' printed on the bottom center. Catalog B was published by H & J Fishing of Northboro, Massachusetts. Because Hamilton sold his Auburn enterprise to the company in Northboro, Catalog A is probably the only fishing tackle catalog ever published by Clayton H. Hamilton.



Author's collection.

Except for the Diamond Series of H & J spinners that are stamped (right and left above), stamped H & J spinners are uncommon. Finding H & J spinners that are unstamped, and not on a card, makes positive identification of the maker uncertain. Thus, collectors generally strive to find lures that are either stamped (as above) or on unaltered cards (next page).



Courtesy of Ron Goddard.

Two unusually stamped H & J lures: a Jack of Diamonds Spinner that was double stamped (right) and an H & J Trolling Spinner with a stamping so deep that it almost went through the blade. For the collector with a sharp eye, there is always one more variant to find in almost any large series of fishing lures.



Author's collection.

Individually packed, this lure was called the Trout Spoon. Note the similarities between these spoons and Morse's Lake Auburn Spoon and Burgess trolling spoons. Specifically, note the blade has two colors on the upper versus bottom surfaces (copper – tin); a long, heavy-duty shaft; and metal beads. These spoons could readily be clipped together to form a large trolling rig. This card measures 4 7/8 X 7 7/8 inches.



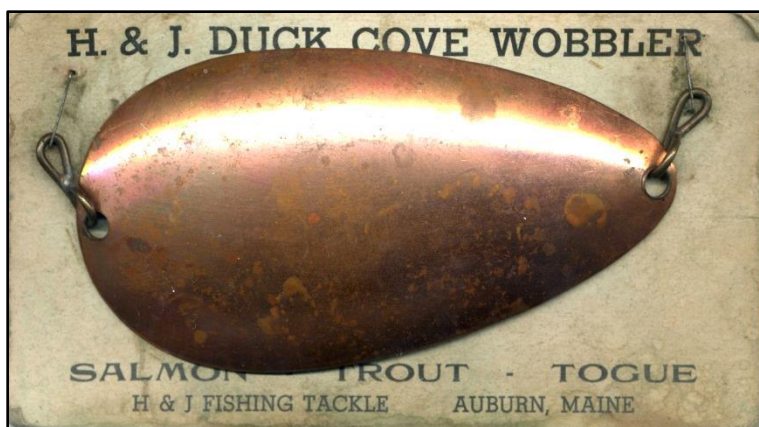
Author's collection.

Two spinners in H & J's Diamond Series, so named for the shape of the dimples on the blade. Note the saying, "Happy Fishing & Joyous Results" (perhaps the source of "H & J" after the Hamilton-Joy partnership dissolved), immediately below the spinners name. These cards measure 2 1/4 X 6 1/2 inches.



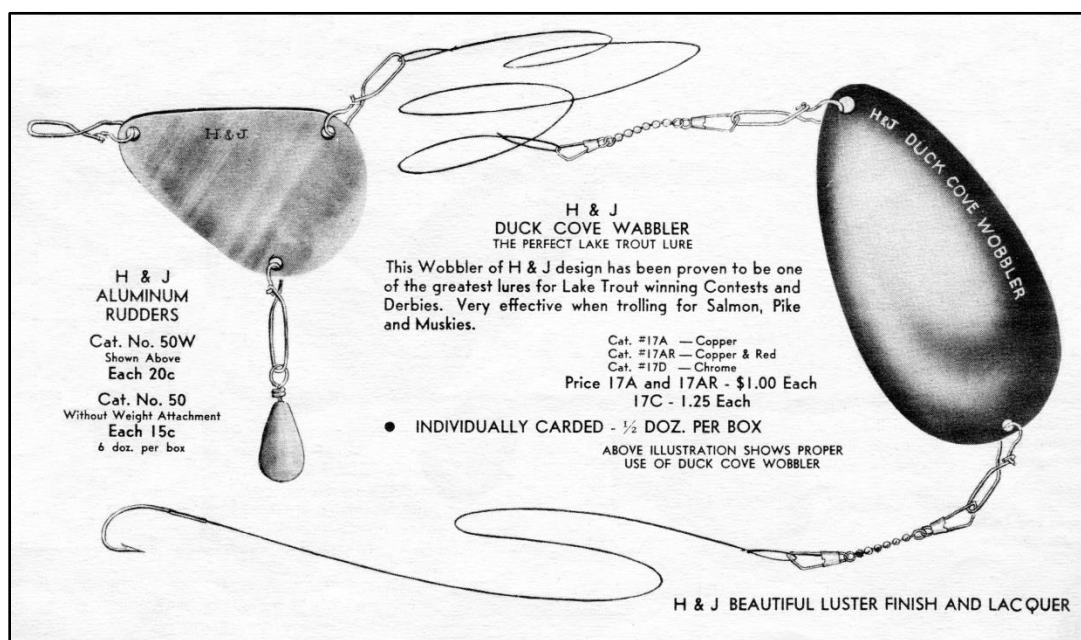
Author's collection.

A set of H & J spinners mounted on their standard card (i.e., 2 ¼ X 6 ½ inches). From top to bottom: Sebago Twins, the Belgrade Spinner (top and bottom views), and the Trout Spoon. Note the printing and check-off boxes in the lower right corner of the bottom spoon. H & J sold their spinners in greater variety of surfaces than any other Maine maker.



Courtesy Ron Goddard.

The above is a thick, copper spoon designed for deep trolling. While the above lure is unstamped, the Duck Cove Wobbler can be found stamped “H & J” (see illustration below); stamped versions of this lure are rare, as are versions with a bright red underside.



Courtesy of the Hamilton family.

Illustration from the Hamilton's H & J Fishing Tackle Catalog (bottom of page 6) showing the proper method for rigging a Duck Cove Wobbler. This spoon is heavy and made for deep trolling, but had to be carefully assembled on the angler's line to have the proper action when trolled through the water.



Courtesy of Dan Leroux.

A salesman's display case featuring H & J Fishing tackle. On the left are Diamond spinners whereas the right side shows how individual spinners were clipped together to form complex trolling rigs. Lee (a.k.a. Abenaki) Spinner Company in South Berwick, Maine – a contemporary of H & J (see chapter about Lee Spinner Company below) – also used this modular method to increase the variety of spinners offered for sale.



Author's collection.

A sample of H & J's Leadfish; these jigs are molded with a zinc alloy. According to Clayton H. Hamilton's 1994 obituary, "The H & J Leadhead Jig is still used by many fisherman today." The row of Leadfish on the left side of the above illustrates the manufacturing sequence: the Leadfish comes out of a mold flat (left top); it's coated and bent into shape (middle left); and finally a snap and treble hook is added (left bottom). Leadfish come in five basic varieties with a variety of colors.



Courtesy of Ron Goddard.

H & J's Cast Baits, shown on a store display card (or counter card), were used more for casting than jigging. Like the Leadfish, Cast Baits were made of a zinc alloy solid lead (an unpainted example on the far right), and painted in a variety of patterns (the "Bass Finish" is shown above). The above card measures 6 3/4 X 9 1/4 inches.



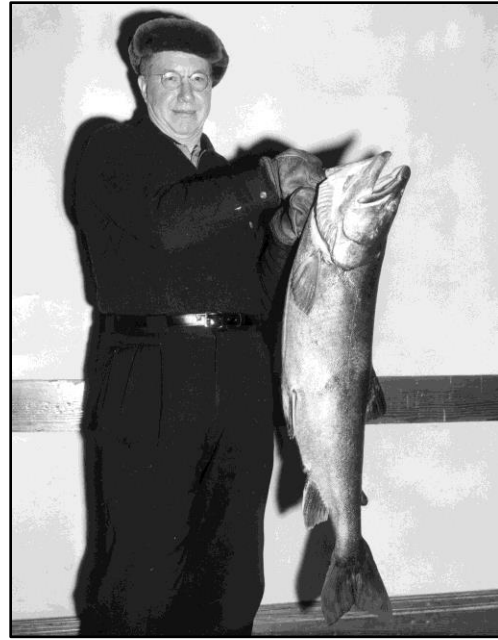
Author's collection.

H & J Fishing Tackle made many types of snelled hooks (upper illustrations) and leaders (lower illustrations). Unlike the leaders made of silkworm gut used to make leaders by Stanley, Bailey, and Burgess, H & J leaders were made from nylon and required “No Soaking.”



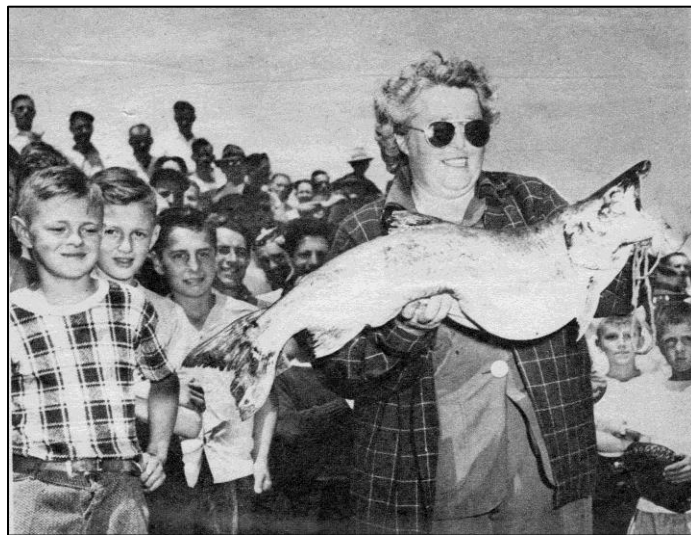
Author's collection.

Note the address on the above card. When in his early to mid-sixties, Clayton H. Hamilton sold his tackle business to a company in Northboro, Massachusetts. After some two decades of making fishing tackle, H & J Fishing Tackle ceased operations in Maine.



Photos courtesy of the Hamilton family.

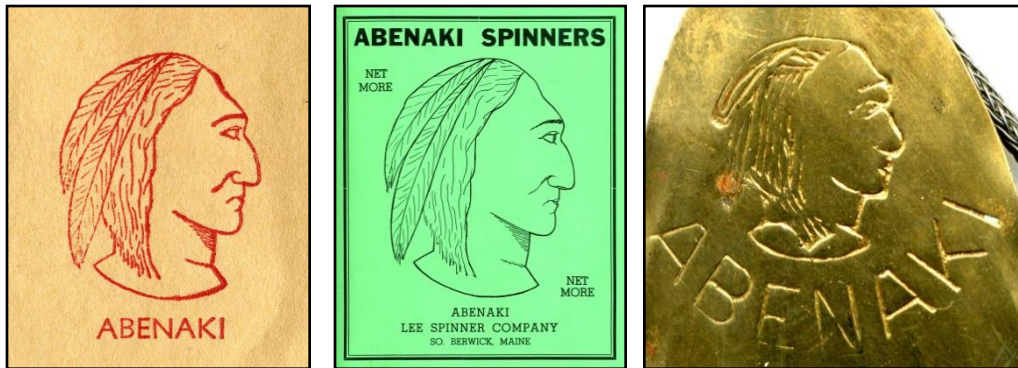
Clayton H. Hamilton (left) and Richard F. Parker (right) holding 24 lbs. and 17 lbs. 6 oz. lake trout, respectively; both fish were caught through the ice on Moosehead Lake. Hamilton was an avid sportsman, and fished and hunted his entire life with family and friends. Dick Parker was one of Clayton's regular sporting partners.



Courtesy of the Hamilton family.

Lila Hamilton, Clayton's wife, with the 17 lbs. 6 oz. lake trout that won the 1947 Moosehead [Lake] Derby. Like her husband, Mrs. Hamilton was an avid angler; she also helped with H & J Fishing Tackle. This photograph appeared in the *Parade Magazine* (p. 23), published by the *Portland [Maine] Sunday Telegram* on 10 August 1947.

**LEROY “ROY” M. APPLGARTH (1910-2000):
Lee (a.k.a. Abenaki) Spinner Company
South Berwick, Maine**



Author's collection.

Leroy “Roy” M. Applegarth was born on August 4, 1910 in Oshkosh, Nebraska. As an adult he lived on Vine Street in South Berwick, Maine where he started the Lee Spinner Company in the late 1940s. Roy was a tool and die maker who was a long-time employee at the General Electric (GE) plant in Somersworth, New Hampshire. He made the blades and other parts for his lures.

During the peak of the Lee Spinner Company, 1951 through 1957, up to 4 people were employed to assemble, pack, and ship Abenaki spinners from the garage at the Applegarth's residence. The business was named for Roy's only child, Lee Applegarth, who died in 1976 when only 39 years old. Lee was a cabinet maker. No advertisements in periodicals for the Lee Spinner Company were located, but an advertisement for Abenaki spinners was published in a tackle catalog (see Gallery below). Thus, it seems likely that Roy sold most of his product directly to the sporting goods dealers and general stores in southern Maine. Lee Spinner Company operated until the late

1950s, perhaps as late as 1960. Roy M. Applegarth retired from GE in 1974 and died in his 90th year on October 28, 2000. He is buried with his wife, Eunice, and son in the New Town Cemetery, Rollinsford, New Hampshire.

Lee (a.k.a. Abenaki) Spinner Company made a great variety of metal fishing spinners, especially large trolling spinners constructed with aluminum blades (a few were made of copper). Their trolling spinners were made with one, two, and three blades mounted on wired leaders. Each blade-configuration came in at least six sizes, and the blades were either fluted or dimpled. The single-blade trolling spinner was the fundamental unit of a Lee Trolling Spinner. Two single-bladed spinners were linked together to make the two-bladed spinner. Similarly, a single-bladed spinner was joined to the two-bladed spinner to make the three-bladed spinner. H & J Fishing Tackle, a contemporary of Lee, used a similar modular construction to make complex, multi-bladed trolling spinners. Lastly, Lee Spinner Company also made minnow trolling rigs and various arrangements of hooks tied on cooper wire (i.e., gang hooks) to be used with their spinners. Both of these products were sold on the Company's card.

While trolling spinners were clearly the main product of the Lee Spinner Company, they also made the two classic spinners invented by Henry O. Stanley: the Cupsuptic Spinner and the Rangeley Spinner. This later spinner was made both with one and two blades, with blades surfaced either in nickel or gold. Lee Rangeley Spinners come with no stamping, a stamping of just "RANGELEY," and – most commonly – stamped with the company's Abenaki logo. While this last variant is easy to identify, the first two variants of the Lee Rangeley are

problematic to identify unless found on an unaltered card.

Abenaki spinners can be found in the bright, florescent packages of COJAC Tackle Company, Caribou, Maine. Apparently, when Lee Spinner Company ceased operations some of their stock was sold to COJAC.

References

Anonymous. 1976 (January 5). Lee Applegarth [obituary]. *Foster's Dailey Democrat*, Dover, New Hampshire. [also published on January 4, 1976 in the *Maine Sunday Telegram*, Portland, Maine].

Anonymous. 2000 (Oct. 30). Roy M. Applegarth [obituary]. *Foster's Dailey Democrat*, Dover, New Hampshire. [also information found on *Ancestry.com*].

Anonymous. 2001 (Sept. 3). Eunice R. Applegarth [obituary]. *Foster's Dailey Democrat*, Dover, New Hampshire. [This obituary is also online at *Seacoastonline*: <http://www.seacoastonline.com/>].

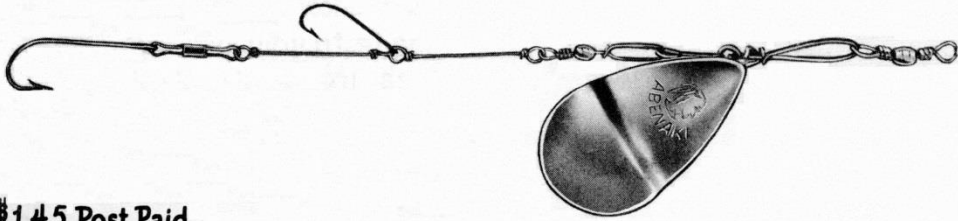
Harold F. Porter. Hal shared with me the two conversations he had about Lee Spinner Company with Roy Applegarth in the mid-1980s.

There is a photograph of Leroy M. Applegarth as a member of the York County [Maine] Superior Court Grand Jury published on page 12 in the *Bidderford-Saco Journal* of May 11, 1965.

**Gallery of Fishing Lures Made by
the Lee Spinner Company
South Berwick, Maine**

Abernaki Cupsuptic Spinner

One of the best known and most deadly spinners used in Maine waters. We recommend it for lake trout and salmon, and have used it very successfully for both. A silver finish with gold on inside of face. Size of blade is approx. 2" by 3".



Price: \$1.45 Post Paid.

Manufacturers of Hunting & Fishing Specialties

Author's collection.

The above advertisement was published in the 1950 spring catalog of the Casco Bay Trading Post (BCTP), Freeport, Maine. A similar advertisement was also published in the CBTP's 1952 catalog, making these ads the only examples the author found of the Lee Spinner Company advertising in a publication.



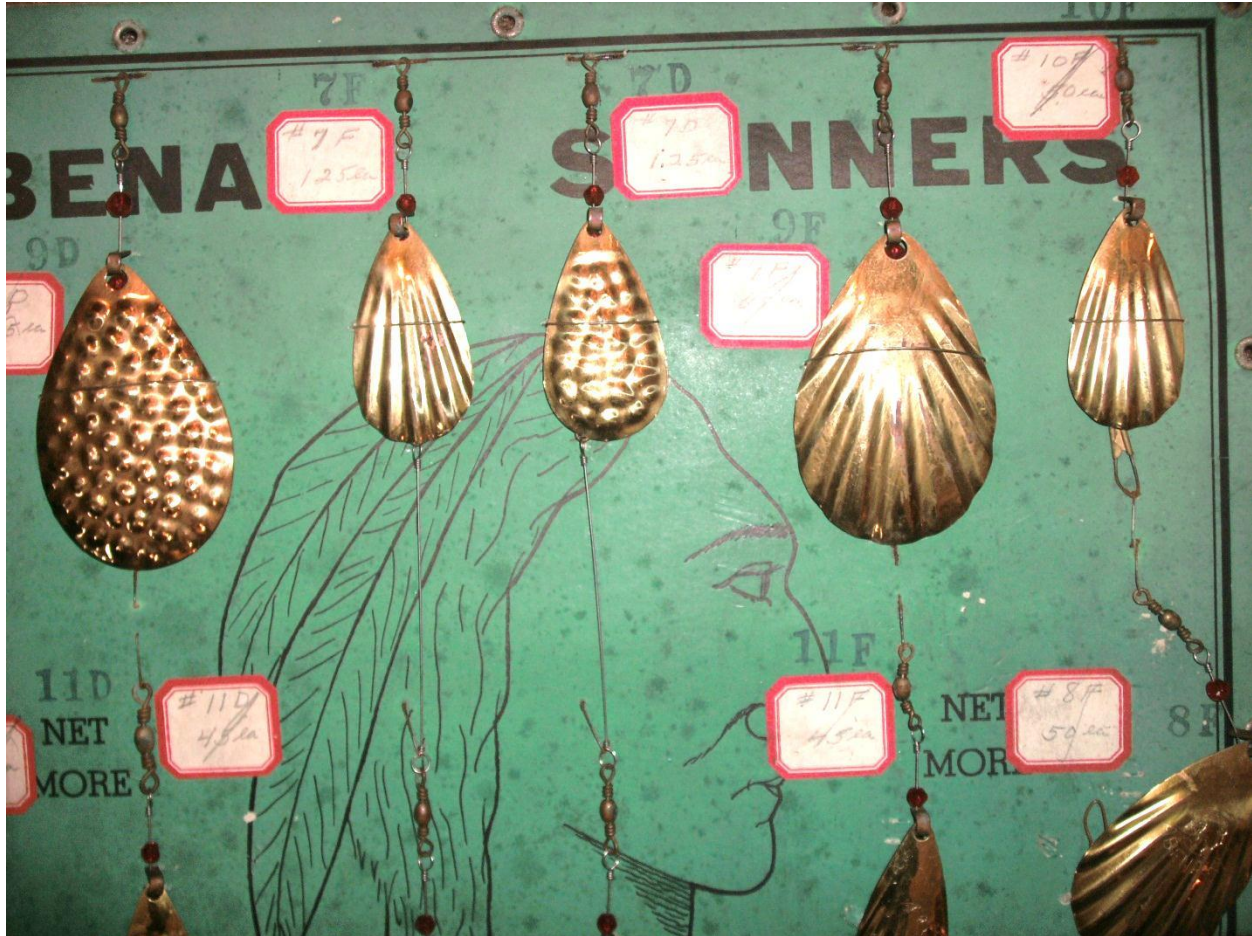
Author's collection.

In addition single spinners clipped together in multi-bladed trolling spinners, Lee Spinner Company also sold single spinners that came in a number of sizes and finishes. These spinners were sold on cards (left above) and in envelopes (right above). Lee Spinner Company envelopes are often stamped and hence the spinner can be compared to this stamping to see if the proper lure is enclosed. For example, the envelope on the right is stamped "8 D," meaning that the spinner in this envelope should be a size 8 with a dimpled fished (which it is).



Author's collection.

Above is a sample of Lee Trolling Spinners, mounted on 14 X 14 inch advertising placards (card on the left is complete, one on the right is partial). These placards once belonged to Lee Spinner Company and were used to display and sell their products. Note the fluted blades (designated "F" on these placards) on the left placard, and dimpled blades (designated "D") on the right placard. These were the two major blade types made by Lee Spinner. Also, note how the single spinners are clipped together to make a complex, multi-bladed trolling spinner.



Author's collection.

Close-up of a section from a 14 X 14 inch advertising placards used by the Lee Spinner Company. The red-edged tags are labeled as follows: # number (blade size), F or D (blade is fluted or dimpled), and price of each spinner (presumably wholesale). This was one of six placards once used by the company. Based on a date written on the back of one of the placards, these display units date from 1946.



Author's collection.

A group of Lee's Rangeley Spinner. The two Rangeley Spinners on the far right (uncarded) have the company logo stamped on the blades, making reliable identification easy. In contrast, the Rangeley Spinner on the far left (on blue card) has no markings, and if found uncarded would be difficult to identify. Similarly, the middle two spinners on green cards lack the Abenaki logo, instead having "RANGELEY" stamped across the blade. Again, if found uncarded these two spinners would be problematic to identify as to maker. The two green cards measure 1 ¼ X 10 inches.



Author's collection.

Two Cupstuptic spinner blades made by the Lee Spinner Company. The blade on the left is colored and rigged as a traditional Cupstuptic Spinner whereas the copper Cupstuptic blade on the right is rigged as most spinners made by Lee, and could be clipped to other spinners to make a large attractor rig for trolling. Most, but not all, products made by the Lee Spinner Company are readily identifiable from the large Abenaki logo stamped on the upper half of the blade.

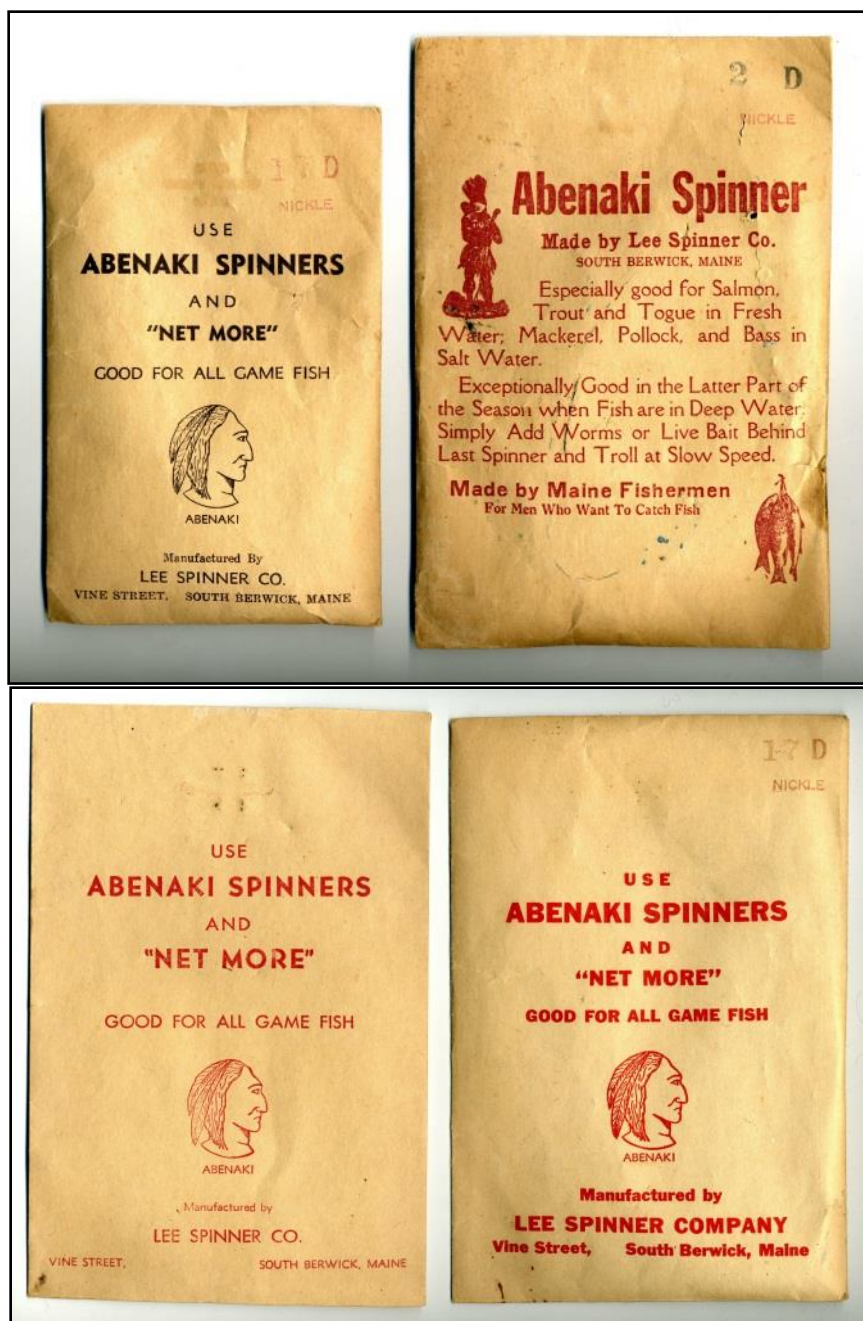


Courtesy of Ron Goddard.



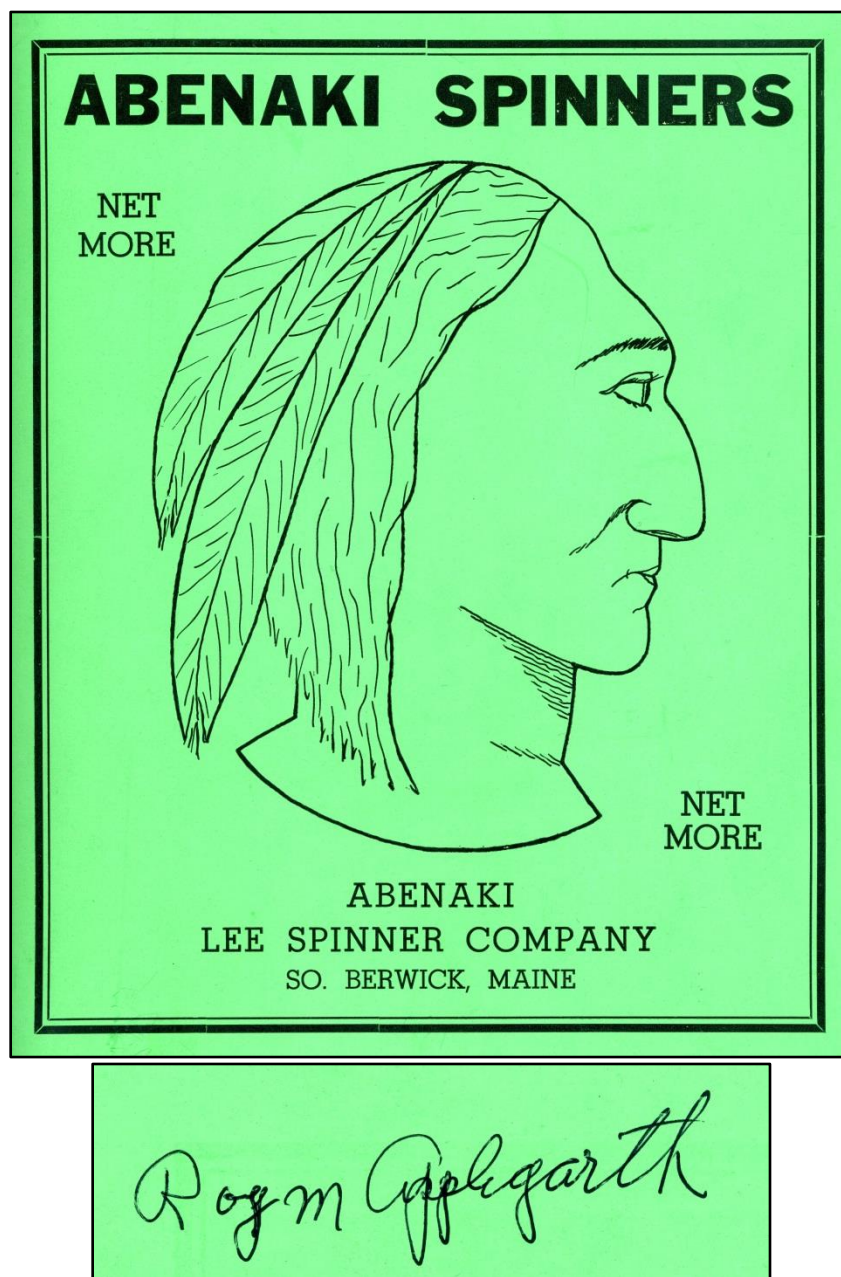
Author's collection.

A variety of Abenaki spinners can be sold on labelled cards (above) as well as in labelled envelopes (see illustration below). The card on the left is 2 ½ X 4 ½ inches whereas the card on the right is 5 ½ X 4 inches. These spinners were designed to troll dead minnows.



Author's collection.

Abenaki Spinners were sold on cards (see above) as well as in many different envelopes, a sample of which is shown above. Collectors should not assume that the lure found in an envelope is the original as people move lures between envelopes. For positive identified of unstamped lures, examples in unaltered condition mounted on cards are the “gold standard.” Luckily for Maine collectors, most early fishing lure makers in the Pine Tree State had enough pride in their work to take the extra effort and time to stamp their products.



Author's collection.

An advertising card that was displayed in retail stores selling fishing lures made by Lee Spinner Company. Lee advertising cards came in at least three sizes: 9 X 11 inches (the above card), 14 X 15 inches, and 15 X 15 inches. The card shown above was signed by Roy M. Applegarth, the company's founder, on the back in the upper left corner. (The signature shown here is enlarged).

Other Manufacturers

Following are the early Maine lure makers other than the major manufacturers. Percy Tackle Company, founded by Gardner A. Percy, primarily made fishing flies but is included here because it made and sold one fishing lure – the Rangeley Spinner. Percy produced a large variety of Rangeley Spinners. Other makers in this section made only one lure before the 1930s, and thus are included in this section (i.e., Hobbs and Kismet). In addition to these manufactures, I also included one distributor of early lures, T. B. Davis Arms Company of Portland, Maine. T. B. Davis sold a wide selection of fishing tackle, both retail and wholesale. Among the stock they handled were a few of the early makers, including Stanley and Burgess. Lastly, I discuss a two very early patented spring hooks invented in Maine along with a specialized hook patented by a Maine inventor and manufactured in the Pine Tree State.

The following companies are alphabetically arranged and no chronological order is implied by this arrangement.

Franklin W. Hobbs Bangor, Maine

The first sentence of Hobbs' obituary, published in the *Bangor Daily News*, states that "one of Bangor's best citizens died Monday afternoon at his home." Franklin W. Hobbs was born in Bangor, Maine, and received his early education in Thorndike and Caribou, Maine. In his early twenties and working as a steam engineer, he took correspondence courses and soon became an "electro nickel plater." Hobbs became widely recognized metal plater, publishing regularly in

technical journals. A short biographical sketch published in the June 1918 issue of *The Metal Industry*, a national journal housed in New York City, concluded the following about the man:

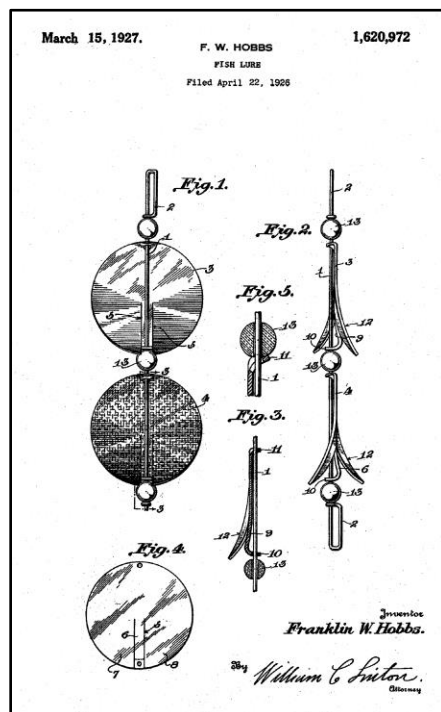
Mr. Hobbs certainly deserves great credit for having taken his degree in the university of the world, as he was forced to leave school early and obtain his present efficiency not only in his chosen field, but also in general knowledge, by home study and observation.

After completing correspondence courses in the early 1890s, Hobbs started his own electroplating business and quickly brought on a partner. The company dissolved after a few years and around 1898, Hobbs became foreman electroplater for Wood & Bishop Company, a Bangor firm that made stoves, furnaces, and tin and iron ware. In 1918, he moved to Crogan Manufacturing Company where he was superintendent of their electro-plating and metal furnishing department. Also located in Bangor, Crogan made saws and steel measuring tapes. After Crogan ceased operations, Hobbs again worked in his own company for last eight years of his life.

Franklin W. Hobbs, who had been born in Bangor during 1872, married Alice M. Roberts of Waldo, Maine on January 4, 1898. The couple owned a house 27 Lane Street in Bangor. In the early 1930s, just a few years after patenting his lure, Hobbs' health started to fail. He died at his in the spring of 1936, leaving behind his wife, son, and a sister. Hobbs is buried next to his wife in Bangor's Mt. Hope Cemetery.

Ten years before F. W. Hobbs dies, he filed a design for a "fish attractor [with] variable speed sliding attractor blade" the U.S. Patent office. In March of 1927, just short of a year after filing,

Hobbs included the following drawing:



From U.S. Patent Office web site.

This lure was named for Lake Lucerne (a.k.a. Phillips Lake), which is located 8 miles southeast of Bangor, Maine. The Lucerne Lure was manufactured in only one size (the shaft is 4 ¼ inched long) and came with a box swivel and a feathered (i.e., red and white) treble hook. I have seen this lure with brass or cooper upper blades; the lower blade is nickel. The blades of the Lucerne Lure are exceptionally thin, but as an electro platter Hobbs would have familiar with the various uses and limitations of different kinds of metals. Stamping of this lure also shows variation because I have seen lures with only the upper blade stamped, and other with both blades stamped. In all cases the stamping is on one side of the blade as follows: “ ‘LUCERNE’ / Pat. Applied For’.” This amount of variation over a short time period (the lure’s patent was applied for in 1926, and Hobbs died only a decade later) suggests that the Lucerne Lure was not

mass produced, but hand-made in small lots. The box measures 4 5/8 X 1 3/4 X 1 inches.



Courtesy of Dan Leroux.

For more information about this lure and Frank Hobbs, including a portrait of Hobbs, see Krohn's (2015a) article cited below.

Percy Tackle Company Portland, Maine

Gardner A. Percy, who became a “nationally known designer of fishing flies,” was born on February 28, 1887 in Newport, Vermont. On August 6, 1910, he married Mildred H. Mitchell of Stow, Massachusetts. In 1913, Gardner worked as a papermaker in Westbrook, Maine. Later he worked for the railroad. Gardner and Mildred started commercially tying fishing flies in their Woodford Street home northwest of downtown Portland in 1926. They specialized in making streamer flies, and some four years later the business was located in Congress Street in Portland.

His two sons, Gardner A. and Lisle C., joined the business in the late 1940s. Gardner junior apparently predeceased his father and when Gardner senior died on September 19, 1949 – at age 62 – Lisle continued the business. By the 1960s the business was no longer owned by a Percy and the company ceased operations in the late 1970s. Gardner A. Percy is buried in Eastern Cemetery, Gorham, Maine.

Percy Tackle Company remained throughout its existence primarily a fly-typing business.

Following are a few examples of work by the Percys:

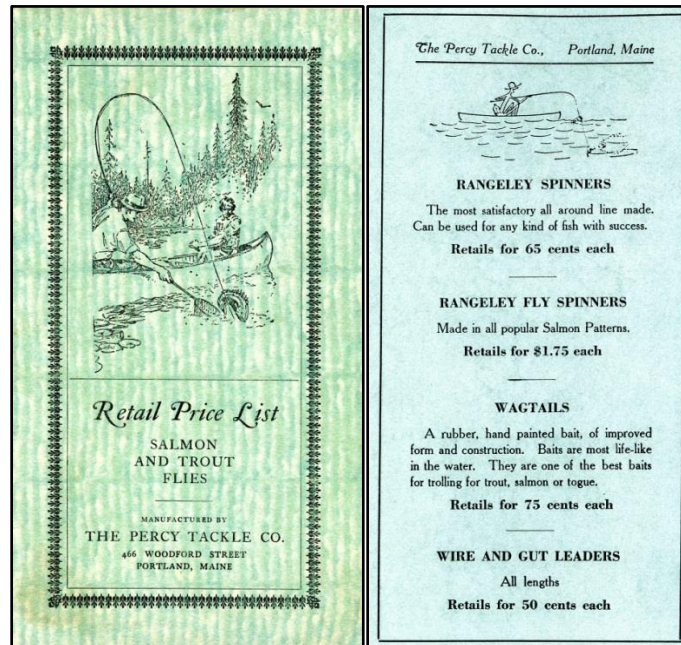


Author's collection.

The following price list dates to approximately 1930 because the address on the cover shows that the Percys were working from their Woodford home and had not yet move to 506 ½

Congress Street. This list gives the prices for three grades of trout flies: Grade A flies sold for 50 cents each, Grade B flies each retailed for 40 cents, and the Standard Grade sold for 25 cents apiece. Trout flies with barbless hooks each sold for 30 cents. Salmon flies sold for \$1.00 each for a single hook; double hook salmon flies went for \$1.50 each. Bass flies retailed for 25 cents each.

Only one of the list's nine pages discusses fishing lures. As can be seen in the illustration on the right below (booklet's green cover on the left), the Rangeley Spinner was the featured lure on this one page:



Author's collection.

Percy Tackle sold this classic Maine lure both on cards in boxes, and on cards alone.

Following are a few examples of Percy Rangeley Spinners:



Author's collection.

Percy Rangeley Spinners were sold in boxes that did not identify the company (illustration on the left, above), but the spinner is clearly a Percy and other have recognized these boxes Percy's (e.g., see page 315, middle row, in Jeff Kieny's 2008 book *Patented Hooks, Harnesses, and Baited-Holders – Identification and Value Guide with Collections*). Percy sold a great variety of Rangeley Spinners, a few of which are shown above. Note especially the illustration on the right that shows spinners with single and double blades, blades colored coated gold or nickel, while another spinner has blades made of shell (far left).

T. B. Davis Arms Company

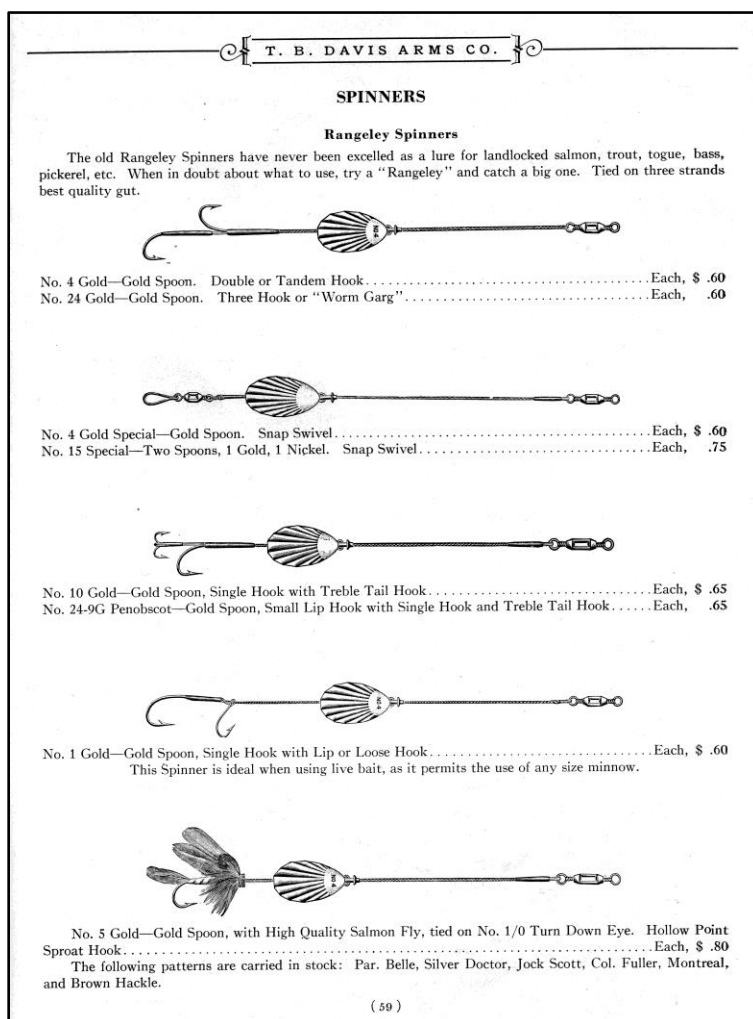
The title of T. B. Davis' circa 1927 tackle catalog declared that the Company, incorporated in 1893, functioned as "Jobbers of Fine Fishing Tackle." As such, the Company would purchase goods from manufacturers and sell wholesale to retailers. The retailers, in turn, sell the products

to the public. Thus, when it came to fishing tackle, T. B. Davis Arms Company saw itself mainly as a middleman (although they did also sell retail via their store in downtown Portland). For example, the circa 1930 fishing tackle catalog of Davis has an extensive inventory of Bill Burgess tackle, demonstrating how T. B. Davis Arms Company was Burgess' middleman. But Davis also sold some tackle with the Company's name although T. B. Davis did not make the product themselves. For example, Rangeley Spinners can be found that were sold in boxes labeled by T. B. Davis Company stating: "Made Expressly for T. B. Davis Co.," or "Made In Maine ... Tied Expressly for T. B. Davis Arms Co." Following are examples of each (boxes measures 7 1/2 X 1 5/8 X 5/8 inches).



Courtesy of Robert Stewart (upper spinner) and author's collection (lower spinner).

T. B. Davis Company sold a large variety of Rangeley Spinners as can be seen from this page out of their circa 1930 Catalog (Note the unique method of numbering on some blades, above and below):



Author's collection.

In addition to the Rangeley Spinner, the Sebago Spinner was "Made Especially for T. B. DAVIS ARMS COMPANY." Advertised as the "The Ideal Spinner For Trolling," the Sebago was an updated version of the classic Cupsuptic Spinner of H. O. Stanley and W. T. J. Lowe. In addition to hook harness that featured sliding links to facilitate hook changes, the blade's underside was entirely plated with gold (versus a silver top and gold bottom in the classic

Cupsuptic) while the upperside of the bade remained the same as the Stanley and Lowes Cupsuptics (i.e., top half plated with silver and bottom in gold). Unlike the classic Cupsuptic, however, the blade on the Sebago Spinner is unstamped.

In addition to being sold by T. B. Davis, the Sebago Spinner was also sold by two tackle dealers in New York City: Williams Mills & Son (blade unstamped) and by H. J. Frost & Company (blade is stamped: “*Kelso*/ TRADE MARK”). Descriptions and illustrations of the Sebago Spinner, along sizes and prices, can be found in the William Mills & Son catalogs for the 1930-40s (1933, p. 55; 1938, p. 46; and 1941, p. 48). The Sebago Spinners of both New York dealers is similar to the Sebago that was sold by T. B. Davis in that the underside of the blade is entirely covered with gold and the hook harness has been updated with sliding links.

The following photograph shows the characteristic gold underside of the Sebago Spinners along with the updated hook harness. Note also that while the classic Cupsuptic features a box swivels, the Sebago comes with a more modern barrel swivel. The box measures 7 ½ X 1 5/8 X 5/8 inches.



Courtesy of Dan Leroux (box) and Jeff Knapp (spinner).

The above Sebago (= Cupsuptic) Spinner should not be confused with spinners stamped “Sebago” made more recently in Massachusetts.

Patented Hook Makers

Jeff Kieny’s 2008 book, *Patented Hooks, Harnesses, and Baited-Holders – Identification and Value Guide with Collections*, includes the patent drawings, photographs, and descriptions for three patented fishing hooks invented in Maine. The three hooks are: (1) a spring hook patented on 1 June 1875 by Ephraim L. Dunlap of Eustis, Maine (p. 16 in Kieny); (2) the “Old Glory,” a fish and animal trap patented on 30 May 1899 by Jacob Cartier of Biddeford, Maine. This patent was co-assigned to Arthur G. Pelletier also of Biddeford, and was sold by Cartier & Pelletier in Salem, Massachusetts (p. 48 in Kieny); and (3) an improved bait hook for casting or

trolling patented on 2 August 1921 by Herbert L. Johnson of Yarmouth, Maine. George F.

Lowell of Freeport, Maine was assigned this patent by Johnson (p. 129 in Kiney).

Dunlap Spring Hook, Eustis, Maine

Spring hooks were not designed for sport fishing, but for subsistence food gathering.

Dunlap's spring hook is the first piece of patented terminal fishing tackle invented in Maine. It is also the last of the patented American spring hook to use a flat-spring instead of a coil-spring.

Note the brass pins used to hold the trap's two jaws together, and also the stamping on the shaft just below the top eye:



Author's collection.

Shown below is a close-up of the marking which "PAT JUNE 1 75," the date that E. L. Dunlap received U.S. Patent No. 163,980.



Author's collection.

Ephraim L. Dunlap was born on a central Maine farm located on a hill above the northeast corner of Embden Lake. His parents were Ephraim and Mary Ann (Lord) Dunlap. Ephraim, Jr. married in the late 1850s and a few years or so later moved to Eustis, in the wilds of western Maine. Here, he and his wife, Margaret, farmed and raised their family. In 1870, the Dunlaps had three sons. In March of 1875 Margaret died, and on June 1 of the same year Ephraim received a patent for the "E. L. Dunlap Fish Hook." The year after receiving his spring hook patent, Ephraim's oldest child, George, died. George was laid to rest next to his mother in Sunset Cemetery, North Anson, Maine.

Ephraim, by 1889, had moved to Kingfield, Maine where he worked as a mason. Here, he received two more patents: (1) in May 1889 he obtained a patent for an animal trap (basically a

heavy duty version of his spring hook), and (2) in June 1897 received a patent for a plough that distributed seeds and fertilizer. When 79 years old Ephraim was living his son, John, in New Portland, Maine. Here he died on 17 February 1914. Ephraim was buried next to his wife and son in Sunset Cemetery, only some 8 miles south of where he was born 83 years earlier.

For additional information about the Dunlap Spring Hook, and the inventor's life and two other patents, see Krohn (2016).

“Old Glory” Fish Hook and Animal Trap, Biddeford, Maine

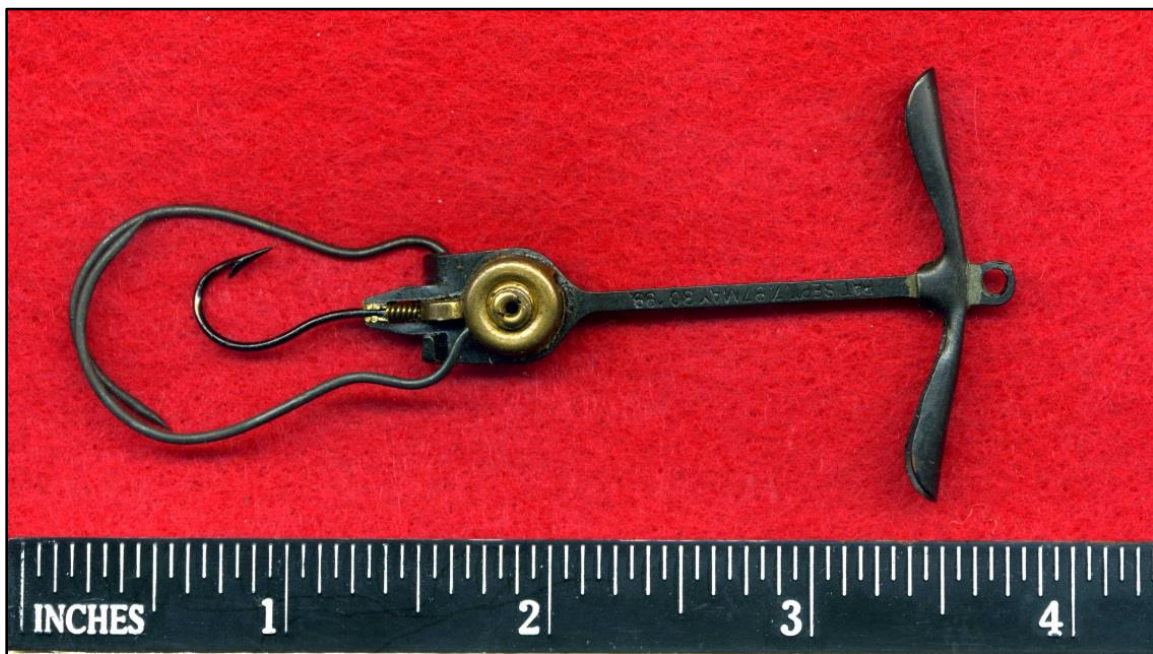
As mentioned above, the 1899 patent for the Old Glory sure-catch fish hook and animal trap was given to Jacob Cartier of Biddeford, Maine, and co-assigned to Arthur G. Pelletier of the same town. Jacob M. Cartier was born on 11 November 1868 in Scarborough, Maine. His wife, Marie Mathilde, was born in Quebec. The couple lived most of their lives in Saco, Maine, where they raised their seven children and Cartier worked his later years as a machinist. Cartier was a long-time member of the Painchaud's Band (see photographs online at the Maine Memory Network) and the Saco Fife and Drum Corps. Cartier's obituary states that he “was held in high esteem by an extensive circle of friends in the two cities [Saco and Biddeford]. His ability as a composer of music was widely known.” Jacob M. Cartier died in Saco on 4 May 1928. He was only 59 years old and, according to his obituary, had been ill for 12 years before his death with “bronchitis.”

Noah Cartier of Biddeford, Jacob's younger brother, received a U.S. Patent (No. 6,583,141)

in September 1900 for a “Warp-thread and Salvage Guide for looms.” Noah assigned the loom guide patent to Jacob Cartier and Arthur George Pelletier.

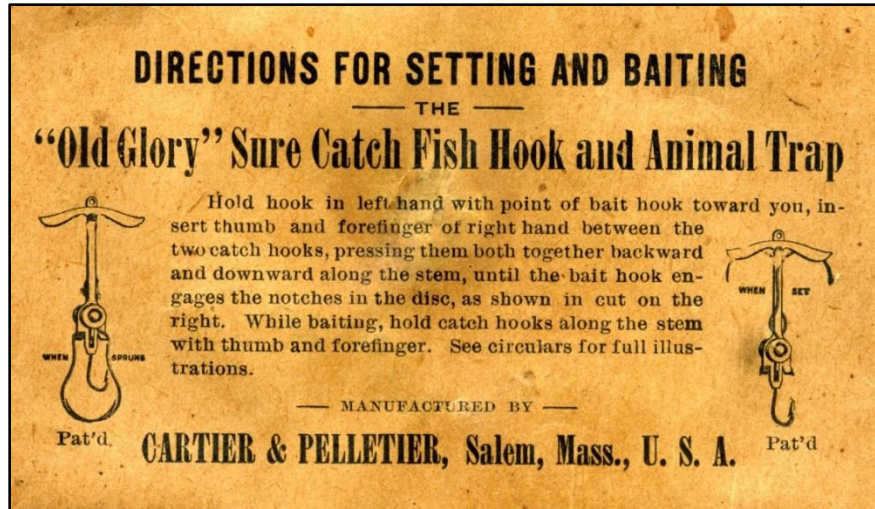
Arthur George Pelletier, like Cartier’s family and many others who came to work the mills of northern New England in the 1800s, was from of French-Canadian heritage. He lived his life in Salem, Massachusetts although the patents of 1899 and 1900 give Biddeford, Maine as his residency. In Massachusetts, Pelletier held a number of jobs, including travelling salesperson.

The Old Glory Sure-Catch, only about 3 ½ inches long, is a fierce looking device:



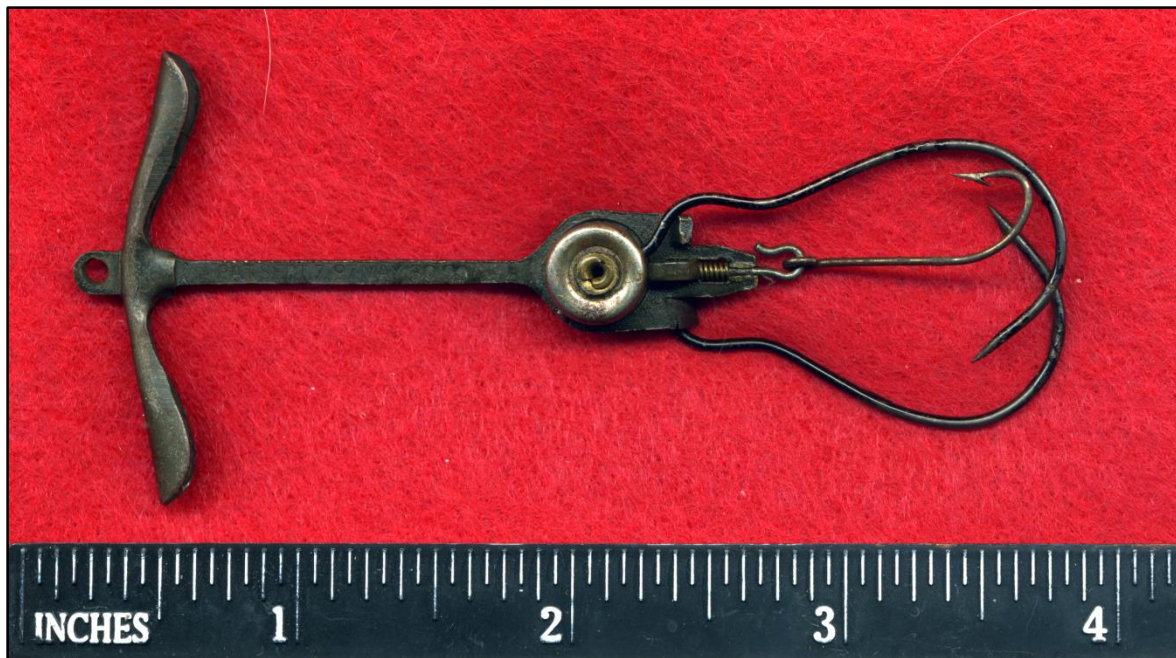
Author’s collection.

The Old Glory Sure-Catch was sold in the envelope shown below, and although invented by two residents of Biddeford, Maine, it was apparently sold mostly in Salem, Massachusetts:



Author's collection.

The first version of the “Old Glory” (shown above) had a built-in hook whereas a later model (shown below), made of more steel and less brass, had a changeable hook (also see Blauser and Mierzwa 2006: 67, 69):



Author's collection.

The shaft of both versions of this fish trap is deeply stamped as follows:

“PAT. SEPT.7.97MAY30 '99.”

The first stamping of 7 September 1897 is the date Jacob Cartier received U.S. Patent No. 589,640. As pointed-out by Blauser and Mierzwa (2006: 67), this patent was for a fish and animal trap noticeably different than the “Old Glory,” and apparently was not commercially produced. The second stamping of 30 May 1899 is the date that Jacob Cartier received U.S. Patent No. 625,742 for the “Old Glory” fish and animal trap.

At the turn of the century, conservation was emerging and sportsmanship as related to fishing and hunting was hotly debated, including in national magazine. With the public becoming more interested in sport versus subsistence fishing, spring hooks were not warmly received in many circles. As an example of cool reception for this fish trap, consider the following quotation authored by F. M. Johnson of Boston and published in *Forest and Stream* on 17 March 1900:

Before me to-night is a paper advertising the “Old Glory” sure-catch fish hook and animal trap, with patents held in the United States, Canada, England, Belgium and France. All sizes furnished for kinds of fish and all kinds of animals, from a mouse to a bear. [To the best of my knowledge, the “Old Glory” was made in only one size]. As a device, it is certainly clever enough. Animals or fish cannot escape. It is the most wicked killer I have ever seen or heard of. It takes away every chance, and holds securely its victim.

. . .

If this is “the most ingenious inventions of the nineteenth century,” then the sooner the twentieth century holds away and blots out even the remembrance of such infringement of fair play the better it will be.

The editor of *Outing*, in a piece published in May 1900, was even more direct:

If sportsmen would threaten boycott to any dealer who kept for sale this trap under discussion [i.e., “Old Glory”], and associations expel any member using it, and black-list all those others who would not otherwise be reached, me thinks something practical would be accomplished.

What effect, if any, these sentiments had on the sale of the Old Glory is unknown. But today,

this device along with the Dunlap Spring Hook, are among the most difficult of all pieces of terminal fishing tackle invented in Maine to find.

Kismet Manufacturing Company, Freeport, Maine

Kiney (2008: 129) assigns Herbert L. Johnson's invention of a spring pin on the front end of a hook only to the Johnson Fish Hook. In addition to this hook being illustrated in the original patent drawing, Kiney provides an photograph of two examples of this hook/spinner on page 129 of his book. But is the Johnson Fish Hook the only lure covered by Johnson's patent? I think not and below is the evidence I've uncovered strongly suggesting that the end product of Johnson's U.S. Patent No. 1,386,061 was not the Johnson Fish Hook, but the Kismet Casting Hook. But before presenting my evidence, let's first discuss the inventor.

Herbert Lawrence Johnson was born around 1889, and as an adult taught school and resided in York, Maine. His wife, Lizzie, was a musician. (In addition to the hook patent, in November 1922 Johnson also a patent for a finger grip on a violin bow.). In the hook patent, Johnson assigned his 1921 invention to George F. Lowell, a jeweler and optician from Freeport, Maine. It's likely that Johnson needed a manufacturer for his invention and Lowell had the skills needed to form metal into the hook envisioned by Johnson. Whatever the reason, the patent – applied for on 29 December 1920 and received on August 2, 1921 – was transferred in the original application by Johnson to Lowell.

In March 1921, the Kismet Manufacturing Company of Freeport, Maine published the following advertisement in both *The American Angler* and *Forest and Stream*:



Author's collection.

Note that a patent had been applied for, and that the ad's publication date (i.e., March 1921) fits into the 8-month window when Johnson's patent application was still pending (i.e., after he applied but before he received the patent). Also note that the advertisement emphasizes the hook, calling the product "A New Natural Bait Holder." Furthermore, the lure itself was named the Kismet Casting Hook and not the Kismet Spinner, again emphasizing the hook:



Author's collection.

Finally, the Kismet's hook is strikingly similar to the hook illustrated in Johnson's patent drawing (see Kieny 2008: 129; Krohn 2015), and, to the best of my knowledge, it was the only fishing lure made in Freeport during the 1920s. Thus, I believe that George F. Lowell was the

founder and owner of Freeport's Kismet Manufacturing Company, and that Johnson's Patent No. 1,386,061 should be associated with the Kismet Casting Hook (also see Krohn 2015b).

George F. Lowell died on 19 May 1925 when only 53 years old. With Lowell having only 4 or so years to produce and distribute the Kismet Casting Hook, this Maine bait is not commonly found.

References

Anonymous. 1918. Franklin W. Hobbs. *The Metal Industry*, 16 (6): 285 (June). [A short biographical sketch that includes a photograph of Hobbs, documents his education, and mentions a technical article he authored in 1913 that was awarded a prize by *The Metal Industry*].

Anonymous. 1925. George F. Lowell [obituary]. *Portland Press Herald*, Portland, Maine. Page 3 (May 20). [Information about Lowell also came from the *Maine Registers*, 1909 to 1925].

Anonymous. ~1927. *T. B. Davis Arms Co. – Jobbers of Fine Fishing Tackle. Catalog No. 45.* Publisher unstated.

Anonymous. 1928. Jacob M. Cartier succumbs to long illness. *Biddeford Daily Journal*, Biddeford, Maine. Page 2 (May 4). [Information about Cartier also came from the *Biddeford & Saco Directory*, 1896, 1900, 1902, 1904, 1907, 1911, 1913, 1916, 1920-21, and 1921-22].

Anonymous. ~1930. *T. B. Davis Arms Co. – Jobbers of Fine Fishing Tackle. Catalog No. 46 (?)*. Publisher unstated.

Anonymous. 1936. Franklin W. Hobbs [obituary]. *Bangor Daily News*, Bangor, Maine. Page 3 (March 3). [Information about Hobbs also came from the *Bangor Business Directory*, 1892-93 to 1936.].

Anonymous. 1949. Percy funeral service. *Portland Press Herald*, Portland, Maine. (Sept. 30). [Page 2 contains a death notice and brief obituary of Gardner A. Percy. Additional information about the Percys, and their business, can be found in the annual issues of the *Portland Directory*, Fred L. Tower Companies Publishers, Portland, Maine.].

Blauser, W., and T. Mierzwa. 2006. *Spring-loaded Fish Hooks, Traps & Lures: Identification and Value Guide*. Collector Books, Paducah, Kentucky. [Includes information about the Dunlap Spring Hook (pages 40 & 41), and the “Old Glory” Fish and Animal Trap (pages 67-69).].

Campbell, A. J. 1997. *Classis & Antique Fly-Fishing Tackle – A Guide for Collectors and Anglers*. Lyons & Burford, Publishers. New York. [Page 274 briefly mentions Percy Tackle Company.].

Johnson, F. M. 1900. The pot-hunter’s friend. *Forest and Stream*, 54 (11): 211 (March 17). [This article was very critical of the Old Glory, seeing this fish trap as an anti-sportsman’s device].

Kieny, J. 2008. *Patented Hooks, Harnesses, and Baited-Holders – Identification and Value Guide with Collections*. The Whitefish Press, Cincinnati, Ohio. [In addition to the three patented Maine lures mentioned above, pages 315 and 325 illustrate post-Stanley Rangeley Spinners produced by various manufacturers.].

Krohn, W. B. 2015a. The Lucerne Lure: an exceptionally rare Maine bait. *The National Fishing Lure Collectors Club Gazette*, 37(142): 12-13, 20. (March Issue).

Krohn, W. B. 2015b. The Johnson Fish Hook – does the patent drawing tell the full story? *The National Fishing Lure Collectors Club Gazette*, 37 (145): 8, 17-18 (December Issue).

Krohn, W. B. 2016. Ephraim L. Dunlap – inventor of American’s last flat-spring fish hook. *The National Fishing Lure Collectors Club Gazette*, 38 (147): 26-30 (June Issue).

Whitney, C. 1900. The month’s review – the pot-hunter’s friend. *Outing*, 36 (2): 200 (May). [Whitney, the magazine’s editor, basically abstracted the Johnson’s earlier article published in *Forest and Stream*.]

PRICE AND RARITY

I have been asked numerous times: So, what is this old fishing lure worth? While a seemingly simple question, a direct answer is seldom possible when the lure is rare and the pool of potential buyers is small because, under such conditions, prices can vary greatly. As most of the tackle mentioned in this book is uncommon to very rare, and the pool of buyers of Maine fishing lures is limited, I made no attempt to place dollar values of these flies and lures. I will comment, however, on three of the major variables affecting price – condition, variants, and rarity.

The condition of an object generally has a direct effect on price, that is, the better the condition the higher the price. So all other factors equal, collectors should strive for flies and lures that are unaltered (e.g., unpainted if so made), complete (box swivel present if so made), and look like new (no or minimum wear, original condition). The next issue is that of variants, or lures that were made with slight differences from one and other. The Stanley Aluminum Smelt, for example, was made in at least eight sizes, can be found with and without the front clip (an issue of completeness), with and without an extra hole drilled in the front (apparently sometimes made with two holes), with and without feathers (of differing patterns), with deep or shallow stamping of the patent dates, and with one or two patent dates (the former being the first year of manufacturing and hence very rare). Which variant is preferred by a collector at any given moment, and hence the most valuable, is largely a matter of personal preference. That is, what “hole” does the individual collector want a specific lure, or variant of that lure, to fill in his or her collection?

Value is driven by each of the above factors, and these factors combine in many ways for any one lure and for any one collector. Also, too few of the possible combinations of these factors for any of the lures discussed herein have been found and sold to make an objective assessment of value possible. Thus, the old saying that “Something is worth what someone will pay,” is in

many ways an appropriate answer for an admirer, or seller, of early Maine fishing lures.

Value is also effected by rarity, with rarity meaning how difficult is it for someone to find a particular fly or lure (i.e.; the harder to find, in general (but not always), the higher the value). Given enough experience, rarity can be judged. Thus, I used my experience, and the experience of other long-time collectors I consulted, to rate the relative rarity of the major lures discussed in this book. The rarity classes used were modified from page xvii of Jeff Kieny's 2008 book, *Patented Hooks, Harnesses, and Baited-Holders – Identification and Value Guide with Collections*. The Whitefish Press, Cincinnati, Ohio.). I used four classes of rarity as follows:

Unknown – known to have existed based on advertisements in periodicals or catalog listings, but no recent examples are known to the author or collectors I consulted.

Very Rare – less than 6 examples known to the author or collectors consulted.

Rare – best of luck finding one, and if you see it, get it.

Findable – uncommon, but if you search hard you will find one.

These ratings are not absolute, but are designed to give the novice collector a relative idea of what early Maine fishing lures are easier to find than others, and to help inform the new collector when an exceptionally rare item has been found. The following listings are ordered by the individual manufacturers as arranged presented in this book. The asterisk (*) after an item means that this item must be in its original mount on a card, or in an unaltered box, to be reliably identified as to maker. While many of the Burgess spoons and spinners are stamped, some are not, requiring one to compare the in-hand lure to catalog illustrations for positive identification. While the names of spoons and spinners produced by the Murray Fishing Tackle Company are known for one time period from a company catalog, most Murray lures are unstamped making positive identification impossible unless the lure was found in an envelope. Thus, many Murray lures are not listed below by their names (for names, see the Murray chapter above), but only by general categories.

Relative Rarity of Early Maine Fishing Lures by Manufacturers^a

Henry O. Stanley

Fly on a card*	Unknown
Rangeley Spinner in a box*	Unknown
State of Maine Spinner	Very, Very Rare
Stanley Aluminum Smelt	
One Patent Date (1895)	Very, Very Rare
Two Patent Dates (1885 & 1896)	Rare
H.O.S. Cupsuptic Spinner	
Original	Rare
Improved	Very Rare
Cupsuptic Lure Box	
H. O. Stanley & Son	Very Rare
Frank Stanley (Cupsuptic box)	Very Rare

Fred E. Bailey

Fly on a card*	Rare
Rangeley Spinner	Findable
Bailey Spinner	Findable
Moosehead Lake Troller	Very Rare
Trolling Gangs	Rare
Lure on a card or in a box	Very Rare

Charles H. Morse

Lake Auburn Trolling Spoon	
Cooper spoon	Rare
Brass spoon	Very Rare

William H. "Bill" Burgess

Fly on a card*	Rare
Trolling spoons	
State-O-Maine	Findable
Bill's Combo	Very Rare
Bill's Salmo	Rare
Spinners	
Cupsuptic	Unknown

J-H-M Special Salmon	Unknown
North Twin	Unknown
Maine Spinner*	Unknown
Bill's Rino	Unknown
Rangeley*	Rare
Rangeley Lake Troll	Very, Very Rare
Richardson	Rare
Bill's South-Arm	Unknown
Bill's Tad Poll	Unknown
Pennesseewassee	Unknown
Penobscot	Unknown
Bill's Umbagog	Unknown
Bill's Combo Hooks*	Findable
Bill's Snelled Hooks*	Findable
Bill's Swivels*	Findable
Lure on a card or in a box	Rare

Murray Brothers

Murray's Aluminum Minnow	Rare
Murray Bail Co.	
Brass spoons	Very Rare
Copper spoons	
metal beads (early)	Rare
plastic beads*	Rare
Cupsuptic Spinner	Unknown
Rangeley Spinner	
In box*	Very Rare
In envelope	Rare
Murray's Unnamed Lure	Very, Very Rare
J. Lee Murray spoons and spinners*	
In envelope, early	Findable
On card, later	Findable

Clayton H. Hamilton (H & J)

Trolling Spoons (on cards)	Findable
Spinners (on cards)	Findable
Duck Cover Wobbler (on card)	Findable
Duck Cove Wobbler – stamped	Rare
Duck Cove Wobbler – red underside	Rare

Leadfish & Casting Baits	Findable
Leaders, weights, etc.	Findable
Leroy “Roy” M. Applegarth (Lee, Abenaki)	
Abenaki Minnow Trolling Rig	Very Rare
Cupsuptic Spinner	Rare
Rangeley Spinner	Findable
Trolling spoons, spinners, etc.	Findable
Other Manufacturers	
F. W. Hobbs (Lucerne Lure)	Very, Very Rare
Percy Rangeley Spinner*	
In box	Rare
On card	Findable
T. B. Davis	
Rangeley Spinner in box*	Rare
Sebago (= Cupsuptic) Spinner in box*	Very Rare
Dunlap Spring Hook	Very Rare
Old Glory Fish and Animal Trap	
First version	Very Rare
Second version	Very, Very Rare
Johnson Fish Hook	Very, Very Rare
Kismet Casting Hook	
Single spinner	Findable
Double spinners	Rare

^a – In assigning rarity classes, I would like to acknowledge the assistance of Dan Leroux and Ron Goddard. However, as the author, I made all final decision and am more than willing to alter assignments pending new information.

Of course, finding any of the above lures in an original box or attached to an original card, makes for an extra special find. The earlier the maker, the more special the find. For example, H. O. Stanley made four lures and each is known to have been sold in boxes (and some also on cards and in envelopes). I know of no collector who has found all four of Stanley’s lures in boxes.

Concluding Observations

Imagine you are standing on a mall balcony and on the floor below you, ordered by the date each item was first produced, are examples of each of the fishing lures made by the early Maine manufacturers. By examining this assemblage of lure making that spans almost nine decades, what patterns emerge?

Henry O. Stanley was one of the earliest Americans, if not the first, to make an American fishing lure out of aluminum that was patented. Hinkley's "Silver Bird" Fish Phantom was a rotating-head, aluminum lure patented in 1897. Stanley's Aluminum Smelt, in contrast, was first patented in 1895, two years before Hinkley's lure. (The Joliet Spinner Bait was another early aluminum lure made in America, but based on advertisements I found, was a decade or so after the Stanley Aluminum Smelt). Stanley also used aluminum to fashion a dead bait spinner. This lure – similar to an earlier English dead minnow spinner – was not patented so its initial year of production is unknown. However, because the State of Maine Spinner and Aluminum Smelt were advertised together, they apparently were both made in a similar time period.

Henry O. Stanley was not the only Maine lure makers to use aluminum. A few decades after the development of the Stanley Aluminum Smelt, William O. Murray of Auburn, Maine also invented an aluminum minnow lure. Murray's Aluminum Minnow, patented in 1910, appears to have been fashioned after the Phantom Minnow, an English lure imported and widely used throughout New England. Finally, aluminum trolling keel were made and sold by both the Murray Bait Company, and later, by H & J fishing tackle.

William Murray's two sons went on to experiment with jointed wobblers and plastics as a material for constructing fishing lures. The Murray brothers, while continuing to make the aluminum minnow and heavy-duty copper trolling spoons in the style of Charles H. Morse, improved on Stanley's Rangeley Spinner by making the hooks detachable. Bill Burgess also had a Rangeley Spinner with changeable hooks, but the Murray brothers claimed, on a printed lure box, that they had "The Improved Rangeley Spinner With Detachable Hooks." Burgess (who also continued to make Morse-type trolling spinners) never made such a claim, suggesting the Murrays were first. Richard and John Murray were also the first of the Maine makers to develop single spinners with clips. The label on the enveloped for Murray Bait Company's Lake Troller reads: "MURRAY's / Lake Troller / (Detachable) / This String of Spoons can be taken apart, / and used singularly or in any combination. The / middle wire may be used as a trace or leader / as desired." Thus, these spinners could be joined together to make twin spinners and even larger, more complex trolling gangs. Burgess, in contrast, made a great variety of single and a few double spinners, but never developed a line of spinners designed to be clipped together. He did, however, develop an extensive line of hook configurations that could easily be used on his different types of spinners. These pre-made hook unit included single as well as treble hooks tied together in many different and unique patterns.

With the use of powered cutting and stamping machines, spinner blades could be mass produced in numerous shapes and sizes. Both Clayton Hamilton (i.e., H & J Tackle) and Roy Applegarth (i.e., Lee Spinners) took advantage of these new machines – along with the lighter,

thinner, and stronger metals available to them – to mass produced spinners. Both of these makers perfected the idea of single spinners that could be easily slipped together in various configurations from simple double spinners to double spinners to multiple-bladed trolling gangs with variable spaced spinners. Trolling gangs, in turn, could be used for surface trolling by those interesting in catching land-locked salmon in the spring. Lead keel weights could readily be added to this trolling gang and used for near-bottom trolling by those fishing for lake trout in the summer. In short, by changing spinner blades, weights, and hook arrangements, the angler could make their own lure for the specific species of fish, time of year, and conditions they were dealing with.

The patterns discussed above are not discrete, but tend to blur over time. Because the time periods in which Maine lure makers lived and worked overlapped greatly (see pages 8 & 9), and some of these makers lived relatively close and knew each other, a new improvement to a lure could spread quickly. Take the Rangeley Spinner, for example. In Stanley's day this spinner was built around a light gut leader. But this quickly gave way to braded gut leaders, and then to light brass cables as leaders. Heavier metal cables soon followed and after Dick Murray retired he went on to use tempered wire as the leader for his improved Rangeley Spinner.

Leaders were made from the intestines of silkworm caterpillars and used on flies, hooks, and lures from Stanley's time, to Fred Bailey's day, and throughout Bill Burgess' time. And while Bailey and Burgess changed with the times and used metal cable instead of gut in many of their lures, they both continue to find uses for gut leaders throughout their lives. But this changed

during the tenure of Clayton Hamilton. While the early H & J leader cards have boxes that were checked for either a “Nylon” or “Jap Gut” (i.e., silkworm gut) leader, H & J quickly went to selling only “Improved Leaders.” These leaders were made of nylon and the H & J leader cards now simply proclaimed that their improved leaders required “No Soaking.” The choice between nylon and gut was no longer offered, and so ended the use of leaders made from the silkworm’s digestive tract in the manufacturing of Maine fishing lures.

New machines, new materials, new processes, and new ideas all continue to make fishing lure manufacturing an ever-changing art and science. Contemplating this change while looking down from our balcony on an assemblage of items representing almost a century of human ingenuity is one the main joys of collecting fishing lures.

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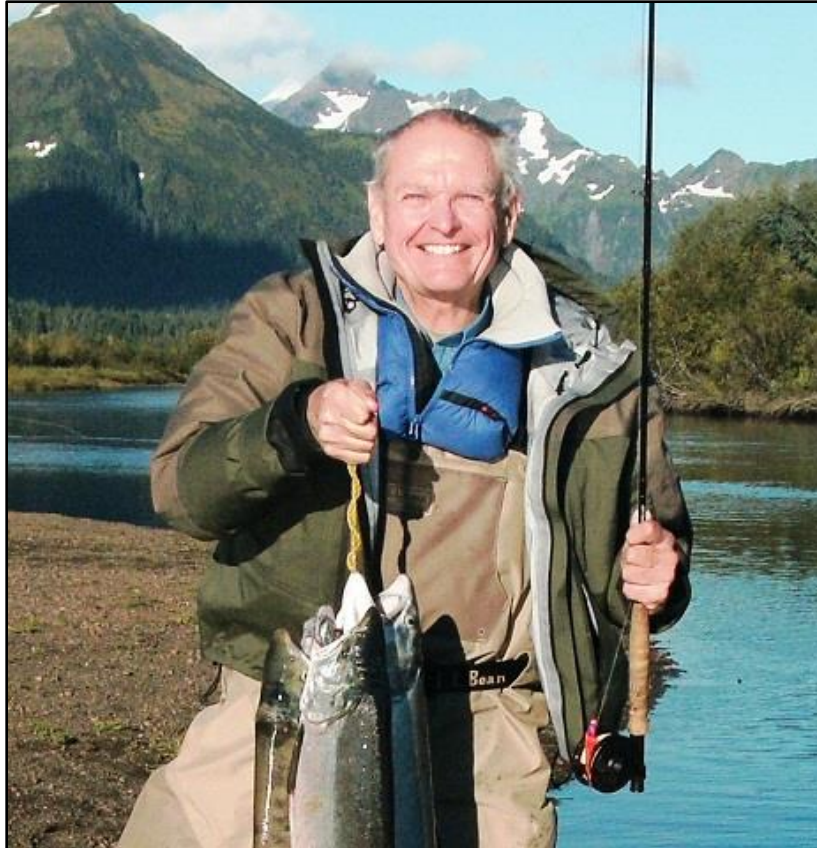
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^a – Henry O. Stanley invented and manufactured the Cupsuptic and Rangeley spinners. Both of these fishing lures were highly successful and continued to be produced after Stanley's death in 1913 to the present.

^b – Stanley's State of Maine Spinner was much earlier, and different, than the Maine Spinner and State of Maine spinners made by Bill Burgess and Crusader (Winchester), respectively. Whereas Stanley's spinner looks somewhat like an Archer Minnow Rig, both the Burgess and Crusader versions resemble a Rangeley Spinner. Burgess' Maine Spinner (blade unstamped), however, is a heavy-duty Rangeley and in this regard is similar to the Bailey Spinner (blade stamped "BAILEY").

About The Author



William B. Krohn, Ph. D., is a retired wildlife research scientist. Born and raised in northern New Jersey, Bill has been an avid angler since boyhood. He especially enjoys fly fishing and has angled from Maine to Alaska, from the Bahamas to Labrador and northern Quebec, and many places in between. Krohn has lived and worked in Maine for much of his adult life, and has collected and studied Maine lures and their makers for over two decades. Many of his technical findings regarding Maine's early fishing lures have been published in the two magazines of the National Fishing Lure Collectors Club.