A Dales Fishing Story

The Appletreewick, Barden and Burnsall
Angling Club
from 1873 to 1973.

by John Baker

THE RIVER WHARFE.

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PREFACE.

Coincident with the Centenary of the "Appletreewick, Barden and Burnsall Angling Club my first thoughts were to write a history of the hundred years of the Club. The Minute Books have been made available for perusal and although resolutions are well recorded they do not provide sufficient information to make an interesting story. There is no other data available which deals with the early years of the Club but I have known the river since 1917, a period of 56 years, so I have included in this book some of my recollections, experiences and local stories.

Those fishermen who have received the benefit of membership of the Club owe a debt of gratitude to the initiative and foresight of the Founders who made available good trout fishing within a relatively short distance of a rapidly expanding industrial area. The result is that today, one hundred years later, members living in the heart of the large West Riding area can still enjoy fishing and the quiet and beauty of the countryside within a relatively short journey from their homes.

As I am concerned intimately with many events I make no apology for writing in the first person.

John Baker,

Horsforth, 1973.

INTRODUCTION.

In 1956 the wrought iron head of a three pronged fish spear was hanging on the wall of the smith cum-wheelwright's shop at Burnsall: I noticed it particularly because it had hardly been affected by rust wasting and I asked Stephen Clarke, then a man of some seventy years, how old it was. He said that his grandfather told him that it was on the wall when he was a boy and we computed that it must have been there for about 150 years; (unfortunately the smithy has since been dismantled and this interesting item of bye-gone days thrown away as scrap). It was a relic of the time when salmon inhabited the Wharfe: the advent of the Industrial Revolution caused dams to be built on the lower reaches of the river which prevented the salmon from ascending to spawn. No doubt, at the time, the extinction of salmon was looked upon as a tragedy but had salmon survived until today the fishing would have been reserved as the perquisite of the few; instead the river provides more humble trout fishing for many.

The Wharfe is a wild river subject to flooding and droughts and does not lend itself to fish culture by planting of food holding weeds. The river bed changes with each winter's floods but the character of the river remains the same, better moorland drainage and tarred roads cause a faster "run off" than formerly so that floods and droughts are more pronounced than they used to be.

In the upper portion of the Club's water, and for some miles above, the river flows through a limestone bed, this gives the water a higher ph.value than in the lower reaches where feeder streams come off the peat, with the result that the Club water provides bigger fish than most other lengths. A "good trout" may be a half pounder from a moorland stream or a ten pounder from an Irish lough. My fishing box is 13" long and I call a good Wharfe fish one which will not lie flat in the box: wild fish over 1 lb. caught on the fly deserve special mention. 1 1/4 lbs. is about the limit of a young wild fish, there are larger fish but usually they are going back above this weight, though I did once see a beautifully shaped 2 1/2 pounder caught below Burnsall. Some of the hand reared fish have grown quite large, a 3 1/2 pounder and several over 2 lbs. have been caught on the fly.

The Club water contains all types of runs and pools, some reputed good, others bad, but in fact each have their seasons and often a pool with a bad reputation pays a dividend if fished.

In two places, Loup Scar and One Tree Bridge, the river goes through gaps similar to the Strid lower down. These gaps must hold good fish yet I have rarely caught them in these places. Runs hold fish some seasons and not others. The pool above Drebley Stepping Stones fished well one season, the next season the results were very disappointing, I found the reason, there was another fisherman at work, an otter! There is a certain stone in this pool which made shelter for a big fish, I knew him for three seasons and watched him grow from under 1 lb. to nearly 2 lbs. several efforts were made to catch him but I never found him feeding; he was in an awkward spot and difficult to stalk, no doubt the reason for his long life.

Did the otter get him? I am sure I should have heard if he had been caught by a human angler, since then I have not noticed another fish in the same place.

It was the intention of the Founders of the Club to let members decide for themselves what was a "sporting method" of fishing, and the term 'any legal lure' is still used in the Rules today. Surprisingly, except for the odd week creeper fishing in June, and at a later date some upstream worming when the water was dead low, the early members mostly fished with a fly. Perhaps it was not surprising, the man who could cast a minnow from a wooden Nottingham reel was a rarity and there were plenty of free rising fish (when the size limit was 7"), even a mediocre fisherman could get good catches on a fly. It has always been the practice to reserve certain stretches for fly only, but there are still some lengths where 'any legal lure' may be used. On waters which are fairly heavily fished I am sure that they do not benefit by being restricted to fly only. The food value of a fly is not worth the effort expended by the larger fish in rising so they tend to become bottom feeders and from a fly fisherman's point of view are better out of the river; a judicious amount of spinning and worming is good for the water. Upstream worming in low water requires a great amount of energy and skill, far more skill than dry fly fishing; during dry weather in July and August upstream worming is about the only way of catching fish.

Casting from a modern fixed spool reel does not need much skill; under some conditions spinning is deadly, in fact persistent unrestricted spinning could empty the river; yet there are pools which cannot be got at by a fly and a wormy or a minnow spun through these places is useful and beneficial if it catches the cannibal fish.

The minimum takeable size limit to suit the water can have an important bearing on results. No doubt the original limit of 7" was on the low side and 8" was an improvement. The present limit of 9" which is the legal size fixed by the Rivers' Board is, in my opinion, too large for our Club water; one is continually catching fish between 8" and 9" which are wild fish, though these fish may survive if returned it is doubtful if they are free rising fish the next season and from a fish crop point of view very wasteful.

There is a growing theory, which I subscribe to, that all fish caught should be taken and overfishing prevented by limiting the bag.

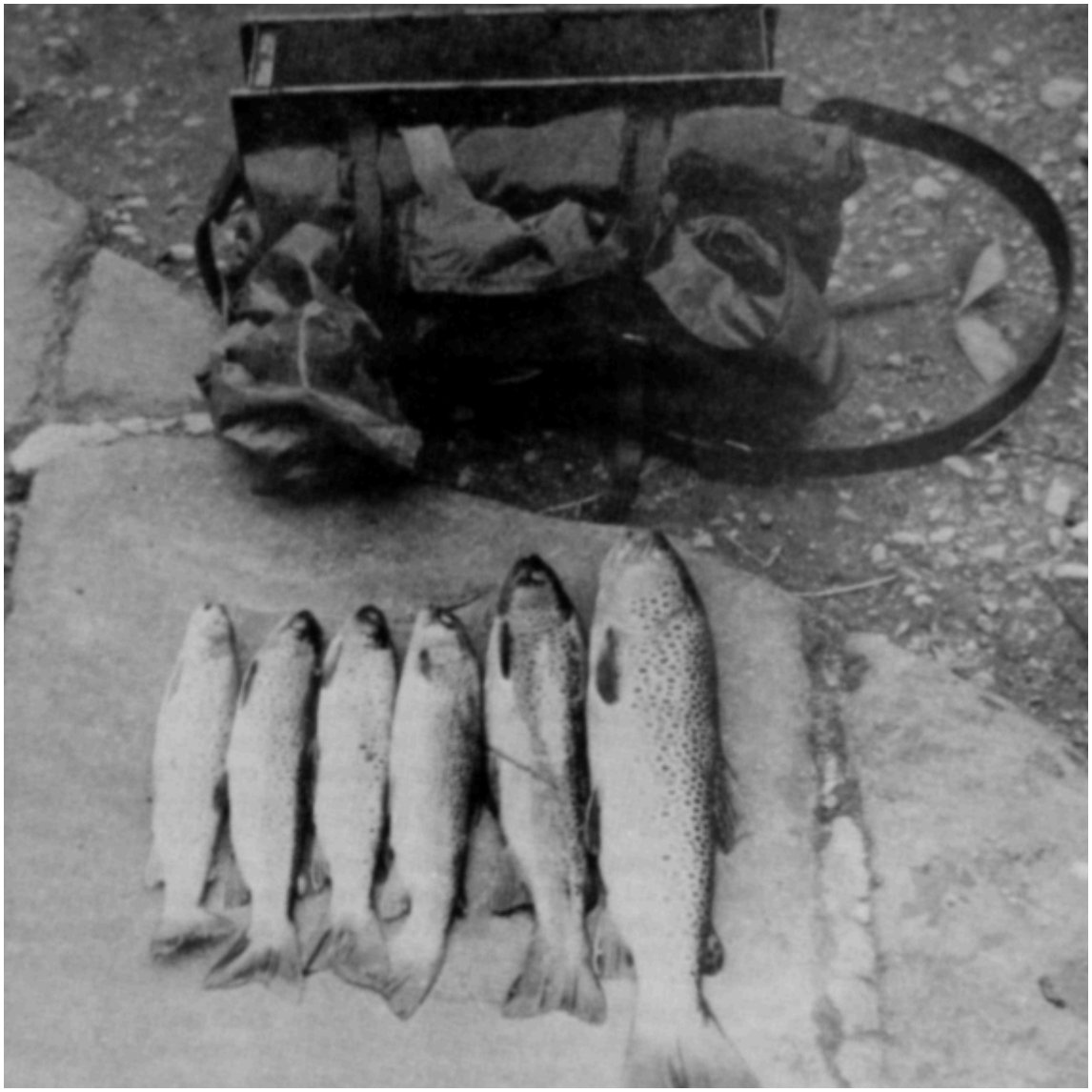
So far I have not mentioned grayling: the Club water holds a good stock of these fish, they seem to me to be a more slender build of fish than those found in Derbyshire and further South, they are game fighting fish and they give excellent sport in the months of October, November and December; from an edible point of view I would prefer a Wharfe grayling in good condition to a trout any day.

I hope this somewhat rambling introduction will give the reader an idea of the type of fishing the Wharfe provides, it would be wrong to pretend that it is the best fishing even in Yorkshire, but the river flows through one of the most lovely Dales, for those who like hills and the country between the high ground and the plains it cannot be beaten. The river has so many moods that you never really know it and yet this countryside grows on one until you feel that you belong to it. I have had good fishing in quite a few pleasant places, but if I was restricted to choosing one place it would be Upper Wharfedale.

"A Dales Fishing Story"

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August 30th, 1960. "A good day with the Fly on the Club water". The large fish weighed 1 lb. 3 ozs.

CHAPTER I.

THE APPLETREEWICK, BARDEN AND BURNSALL ANGLING CLUB.

The Formative Years 1873 to January 1894.

The first Minute Book of the Club has a heading dated 1873, and the following note:-

"At a preliminary Meeting called by Mr.Kendall of a few friends to see if it was advisable to form an Angling Club in the township of Burnsall as several parties and landowners including His Grace the Duke of Devonshire had promised to support a club if formed it was agreed to call a special Meeting.

A special Meeting was called to take place at the Rose & Crown Inn, Ilkley, on Wednesday, the 30th of April, 1873".

At this Meeting it was decided that the Club should be called

"The Burnsall Angling Club". A management Committee of six was agreed consisting of Messrs.G.Demaine, S.Lister, E.H.Wade, E.Whittaker, J.Whittaker, J.Hawksworth; Secretary J.Knowles, Treasurer W.Kendall.

A set of Rules was drawn up and subsequently printed. In the Rules Mr.Hawksworth's name does not appear so he evidently dropped out.

Interesting items in the Rules are:-

Membership limited to 30.

Annual subscription £-1/- entrance fee ditto.

That no member shall exercise his privilege of membership until his subscription,entrance fees and fines, if any, have been paid.

That anyone proposing a new member shall be answerable for his first year's subscription. (There would be something to be said in favour of introducing this rule today.

The use of salmon spawn or medicated baits or snares was forbidden.

The season opened on the 1st of April and was closed on the 1st of October.

Members breaking Club rules would be subject to a fine of 10/-. The minimum size limit should be 7 inches.

Author's Note: There is no mention of the extent of the water except that no bottom fishing be allowed below Barlow Beck. I cannot find Barlow Beck on the ordnance map but there is a small unnamed beck running in below Mill Islands, I think this must be Barlow Beck. So one infers that the Club's fishing right extended on the right bank from Burnsall Bridge to Drebley Stepping Stones, and on the left bank from Barlow Beck down to Drebley Stepping Stones.

The Minute Book records the Committee Meetings as well as the Annual Meetings. To start with they are all held at the Rose & Crown, Ilkley, from time to time the meeting place is changed, for quite a number of meetings the record does not state the place of the meeting and one infers that by custom the Rose & Crown had become the Club's normal headquarters.

1874. There was a Meeting on the 11th March, 1874, where the Rules were confirmed and a new committee elected. Also at a Meeting on the 2nd December, 1874, it was decided to hold the Club's first Annual Dinner at the Rose & Crown in March 1875.

Two Watchers had been appointed, Mr.Bland and Mr.Wall, who were to be asked to the dinner and paid £1 each (these were obviously part time watchers).

A resolution was passed authorising stiles to be put up.

1875. There was a Meeting on the same date as the Annual Dinner, the 2nd of March, 1875, when the only business was a change of Secretary and a resolution that each member could take a friend with him when out fishing. At an earlier date there is a reference to members' friends' tickets costing £1.1.0. so this was not necessarily a free privilege but that each member could buy a friend's season ticket if he desired.

1876/7. 1876 seems to have been a quiet year for meetings and at the A.G.M. on the 17th of June 1877 there is a note that it was only a very small gathering.

At a Committee Meeting at the Rose & Crown on the 27th of February, 1877, the Committee approved a much extended set of new Rules. The significant alterations and additions being:-

That this Club be called

'The Burnsall and Appletreewick Angling Club'.

That members' tickets were not transferable.

That at the commencement of the season the fishing shall begin at 8 a.m. and close at 8 p.m. But from the 1st of May to the end of July the times shall be 6 a.m. to 10 p.m. and from the end of July to the 30th September the times shall be 8 a.m. to 7 p.m.

That for the first seven days at the commencement of the season and from the period that the keeper issues a notice of the appearance of the May Fly up to the 1st of June, and from the 1st to 30th of September none but members be allowed to fish, but any member being accompanied by a friend "will have the privilege of lending that friend his rod".

(I thought at first reading that this reference to May Fly meant that there was at one time a May Fly hatch on the Wharfe but from later notes it is evident that it refers to the Stone Fly. For the first time there is a note that grayling fishing ends on the 1st of February).

That keepers be instructed to examine members' tickets and make a monthly report to the Committee.

That a keeper shall have a reward of £1 on prosecution of 'any poacher.

In the printed set of Rules there was a paragraph which had been crossed out to the effect that any member residing within a radius of 7 miles of Drebley Stepping Stones shall not fish more than 3 days in one week. This rule must have been thrown out at the A.G.M.

1878. At the A.G.M. on March 2nd, 1878, it was decided to print 50 bills to be posted in Addingham, Bolton, Burnsall 9.nd Appletreewick, to warn persons not to fish the waters of the Club.

That Mr.James Newbold be "treated with" to become a watcher of the Club at 10/- per week, part of his duties being to "Thorn" the river, put up stiles and cut a few trenches in places where required.

There is only one Committee Meeting recorded in 1878 - April 17th, at the Crown Hotel, Addingham, the business being the acceptance of several new members. Yet it was a busy year for negotiating additional fishing rights.

After the A.G.M. of 1878 the 1877 Rules had been reprinted and reworded to some extent, and for the first time a list of members' names was attached and the extent of the Club waters defined as follows:-

"The Club's preserves extend from Burnsall Bridge down to the Stepping Stones at Drebley, a distance of over three miles. The preserves abound with trout and grayling".(It looks as if the Club had lost the fishing rights on the left bank).

A resolution was passed that the close time for grayling was 1st of February to the 15th of June, both days inclusive.

Proposed that Mr.Josephus Inman beengaged as a second watcher at 10/- per week. (Evidently poaching was rife in those days if it needed two men to control 3 miles of water only).

Proposed that the Committee be empowered to treat for the rental of additional water which would be beneficial to the Club.

1879. The A.G.M. for 1879 was held at the Rose & Crown, Ilkley, and though the record is brief the printed Rules set out extended fishing rights by the addition of half a mile of fishing on the Hebden side below Hebden Stepping Stones, the Club had also got back the fishing rights on the Barlow Beck side.

There is a note stating that further negotiations are in hand and application had been made to the Steward of the Duke of Devonshire for leave to fish down to Barden Bridge.

The printed list gives the names of 42 members but certain names are erased.

The accounts for 1878 are included (printed) in the report for the first time, one item headed "cash Balance" is £3.18.91/2. but on the credit side is an item " 6 subscriptions not paid, estimated to realise £6.6.0." Whether the fact that some of these subscriptions remained unpaid is the reason for certain members' names being scored out is a matter for conjecture. The total expenses for the year were £38.12.0. The largest item being watchers' wages £26.0.0.

There is only one item of rent to Mr.Bland for £4.0.0. so the rest of the fishing must have been free.

1880. 1879/80 was a busy period for the Committee. Meetings were held on 4th April, 6th December and 7th February, 1880.

Mr.Robinson's fishing at Hebden was rented at 35/- with a free ticket to Master Hird the son of the owner of the land.

Mr.Wilkinson, the owner of the Mill at Hartlington, had given the Club full right of preserving the Dibb, in return Mr.Wilkinson got a free ticket for the whole water, and Mr,Binns, the tenant, a ticket for the Dibb.

Mr.Brown, of Holme House, Barden, to have 6 tickets (?day) in return for letting the Club fish through his land.

A letter was read from the Secretary of the Yorkshire Board of Conservators stating that the Fresh Water Fisheries Act was unlikely to come into force this year and the Committee decided that the close times for grayling be not enforced.

A letter was read from Mr.Martin, Steward to His Grace the Duke of Devonshire, wherein the consent is given to the Club to extend the preserves down to Barden Bridge, on condition that His Grace's rights were in no way interfered with. (From later Minutes it seems that this was on the left bank only).

Mr.Buck of Hartlington declined to let his fishing below Burnsall Bridge for the current year but Mr.Rennard of the New Inn had agreed to let the Club have his fishing for a trial period of one year in view of Mr.Buck's refusal. (Was there no love lost between these two gentlemen?).

The Secretary was requested to write to members who had not paid their subscriptions.

The Committee decided to recommend to the A.G.M. that the name of the Club should be:-

"Burnsall, Appletreewick & Barden Angling Club".

That the close season for grayling be 1st of February to 31st of March.

That no bottom fishing be allowed on the Duke's water. That the number of members be increased to 50.

A note to be printed on the tickets warning members to keep to the river side and that no dogs be taken by anglers.

The A.G.M. was held on the 6th of March, 1880, at the Rose & Crown. The Committee's recommendations were confirmed. A number of new members elected. A vote of thanks was passed to His Grace for the fishing rights. A vote of thanks also to Mr.J.A.Bland of Hartlington for the erection of the suspension bridge across the Wharfe which is a great boon and convenience to anglers. *

Authors's Note: * The date on the remaining tower of the Suspension Bridge is 1879, it must have been a very low bridge but presumably survived the flood of 1882 which destroyed the Burnsall Bridge. See also Chapter IV "Changing Conditions".

There are no rules for 1880 or accounts for 1879 included in the Minute Book.

There were Committee Meetings on 14th May and 19th November,1880. It was decided to spend £5 to £6 in piling the river. Earlier in the records there was an instruction to thorn the river, later on 'piling' crops up again, so that poaching the fishing by netting must have been fairly prevalent.

It was decided to strike three members off the list for not paying subscriptions.

The first mention of artificial hatching of fish is made, the Club being offered four or five hatching boxes, the Club agreeing to pay the cost of the hatching.

1881. The A.G.M. for 1881 was on 5th March at the Rose & Crown. A copy of the printed report for 1880 and the Rules for 1881 is attached to the Minutes. The Club had acquired further fishing rights from Hebden Stepping Stones upstream for about a mile on the Burnsall side. This in conjunction with the half mile already obtained below the stepping stones on the other bank was terminated the "Upper Preserves".

The hatching troughs had not been used due to the fish spawning earlier than usual.

"The Club is desirous of introducing some thousands of fry into the river, but due to members paying their subscriptions late they are hampered with their work".

A printed list of members is attached with a mark against the names of those who have not paid subscriptions, in addition to the three expelled there is one member who owes three years subscription, another two years and a new member who has not paid a subscription or entrance fee: It was decided to be less lenient in future and make the payment rule more severe, all subscriptions to be paid by 1st March. The Treasurer, in presenting the balance sheet, has assumed that the unpaid subscriptions are good debts and on this basis the Club has a balance in hand of £9.15.0.

There were Committee Meetings on the 8th April, 1st July and 4th November in 1881.

Inman, the watcher, had his wage increased to £32 p.a. and if the Club prospered, to £34 the next year (£2 a year was a lot of money in those days).

The Mill Islands fishing was taken for 10/- per annum.

The offer of the Vicar of Burnsall to let the Club have his fishing was accepted.

Arrangements were to be made to provide fish hatching apparatus at Ilkley.

A letter to the Duke's Agent was to be written requesting assistance in preventing pollution of the river through Barlow Beck by the refuse from lead washing at the mines in Appletreewick: also the refuse carried from the Paper Mills at Skyreholme through Fir Beck.

It was proposed to wait on Mr.Bland to arrange for his fishing and the use of the bridge for £25 for five years.

The Club agreed to purchase 2000 Loch Leven ova.

There is also a purposeful note re netting reading:-

"Propd. Mr.Crabtree, Secd. Mr.Morrell. That the Committee having had under their consideration the case of Mr.Kelsall netting in his own property in accordance with the agreement with the Club and learning with regret the offence caused to that Gentleman, by the strictures made upon him by Mr.Burrows at the Inn at Burnsall, the Committee are of opinion that if any member has complaints to make respecting the fishing they are only in order when made to the Committee through the Sectr. and further that a copy of this resolution be forwarded to Mr.Burrows and also to Messrs. Kelsall & Proctor".

1882. The A.G.M. for 1882 was held on February 25th at the Rose & Crown. The printed report for 1881 and the Rules for 1882 are attached to the Minutes.

The Club renamed itself "The Appletreewick, Barden and Burnsall Angling Club". The name it still holds.

The fishing rights have been extended again and on the North side, the left bank, the Club can angle from Hebden Stepping Stones to a little above Linton stepping stones, this is through the Lythe Estate by kind permission of the lessee J.W. Logan Esq.,

It is reported that over 40,000 fry have been hatched and are only waiting timely maturity to be turned into the Club's waters.

It has now become an annual custom to pass a vote of thanks to the persons, each named separately, who have let the Club have fishing rights. Admittedly most of the rights are free of charge but it is a custom we might well reintroduce at the present time.

In spite of the tightening up of the Rules for payment of subscriptions five new members have not paid either entrance fees or subscription! There are now 47 members.

It is noted that the attendance was larger than the previous year.

Day tickets can now be purchased for 2/6.

1883. There were Committee Meetings on 18th March, 28th April, 1st December, 16th December in 1882 and 27th January, 1883.

There was a discussion as to whether trout fry should be put into the river above or below Drebley. Those in favour of below won the argument.

The watcher was instructed to send the Committee monthly reports but he was evidently very lax in this as it is referred to several times at future dates.

The Committee are all the time trying to secure better terms and more fishing rights.

The Club were in some trouble as there was a threatened prosecution for taking ova from a stream belonging to Mr.Noble of Linton,in the event of a prosecution the Club agreed to pay the fines of the infringing members.

There was a proposal from some source that salmon ova should be introduced into the river. The Committee were entirely opposed

to this as the abstraction of salmon would be injurious to the trout fishing. The A.G.M. for 1883 took place at the Rose & Crown.

Interesting items of expenditure in the 1882 report are water rent for hatching boxes £1. Waggonette hire for journeys to procure ova £2.11.6. Rates for the first time 13/-. Rents were only £6.2.6. so most of the fishing rights were still free. Day tickets had brought in £5.2.6. and the price of day tickets was increased for the following season to 5/-. The subscription was still £1.1.0.

It was decided to limit the membership to 50 (there were 52 members in 1882).

An important amendment was made to the Rules that new members should be elected in order of priority.

1884. Committee Meetings were held 23rd February, 3rd March, 23rd April, 3rd July, 23rd November, 1883, and 2nd February 1884. The main business being maintaining fishing rights. It was agreed that Frank Ideson be set on as an additional keeper for 20 weeks at 10/- per month.

The watcher urged that the piling of the Lythe House water should be undertaken as soon as possible. There was no fixed place for hatching boxes and the watcher was told to find somewhere suitable.

It seems to have become customary for several members to present ova to the Club, mainly from Loch Leven.

1884. The A.G.M. was held on February 23rd, 1884, at the Rose & Crown. The accounts show that increasing the sale price of day tickets had reduced the income from this source to £3.15.0.The subscription was increased to "One Guinea and a Half" and entrance fee to "Two Guineas".

The Club now have both banks of the river from Barden Bridge up to Drebley Stepping Stones, known as the "Lower Preserves".

1885. The Minutes of Committee Meetings held on March 14th, March 28th, August 9th, November 1st, November 22nd, 1884, and January 1st, 1885, were extensive. There had been some posters issued by the Yorkshire Fishery Board in respect of net licences, these had been posted but torn down. A Mr.Birch was warned that if he was found netting or fishing in the Club water he would be prosecuted. Inman was paid 45/- for helping to stake the river. The hatching boxes were to be removed to Ilkley.

A request was received from the Rector of Burnsall for a subscription towards the erection of a foot bridge at Hebden, the Club decided to give three guineas, a proposal for five guineas was defeated.

An application was made to the Duke's Steward for fishing rights on Chelker Reservoir.

The A.G.M. for 1885 was held at the Crescent Hotel,Ilkley.

The increase in subscriptions in 1884 was fully justified as the rents had increased to £28.18.0. Staking the river £14.16.8. Watching expenses £42, the balance in hand being reduced from £28 to £19.

Over 80,000 ova had been collected for hatching.

1886. Committee Meetings were held on 27th March, 15th May, 31st October ,6th November, 14th November, 1885 and 30th January 1886, followed by the A.G.M. at the Crescent Hotel, Ilkley, on 20th February, 1886. Items of interest were 6 free day tickets to the Police Officer, Burnsall, to fish the Rector's water. An application to the Duke's Steward for permission to construct fish ponds at Plough Dyke (I can't find Plough Dyke on the map, but this may be the present site of the ponds). It was decided to put some of the trout fry into Chelker Reservoir, though there is no record that the Club have fishing rights in Chelker. Mr.Chippendale seems to be the active member of the Committee in rearing fish as he was awarded £15 for his work in collecting and hatching ova in 1883/4/5.

Rule 6 was amended insofar as applications for membership were concerned. An applicant had to be proposed and seconded by members of the Club in writing then the application was considered by the Committee, three adverse votes disqualifying the applicant.

The Annual Report for 1885 shows that the Club has all the fishing rights on the water from Linton Stepping Stones to Barden Bridge on the Appletreewick side and all on the Burnsall side from Linton Stepping Stones to Hebden Suspension Bridge, and from Burnsall Bridge to Barden Bridge.

There is a note in the Report as follows:- "On September 26th last, a very strong and beautiful Suspension Foot Bridge over the Wharfe was "opened" at Hebden. It is high enough to be safe from floods, and no doubt it will prove a great convenience to members. The Committee made a grant of £3 out of the funds of the Club towards the expense of its erection".

"The new stone Bridge at Burnsall was opened on October 12th,1884. The structure is a very substantial and handsome one".

There is no record in the Minutes of the date when the flood destroyed the earlier Burnsall Bridge. (The stone on the bridge records "The Great Flood January 29th 1882").

There is a debit balance for the year of £1.9.7. but 10 members out of 50 had not paid their subscriptions in spite of the strict rule that members are not allowed to fish who have not paid the subscription. Were times hard or was collecting subscriptions being handled in a lax manner? There is a debit of £10.6.8. for making rearing ponds but no clue as to the situation.

1887. Committee Meetings were held on 20th March, 7th May, 16th October,15th November, 11th December in 1886 and on the 26th January, with the A.G.M. on the 12th February, 1887.

The bulk of the business was securing fishing rights,including a joint attempt with Kilnsey Club to secure the rights in Linton Dam. The Club finished up with the same rights as previously except that there had been a change of tenant at the New Inn and members were only allowed to fish this stretch provided they stayed at the New Inn or had a meal there.

At the Meeting on the 20th March the Secretary was instructed to inform members whose subscriptions were outstanding on the 27th March that they had four days in which to pay, otherwise they would have been considered to have resigned and another member elected in their place. This policy worked because in the printed report for 1886, presented at the A.G.M. in 1887 it is reported "A very gratifying feature of last years work is the fact that for the first time in the history of the Club, the subscriptions (with one exception) were paid before the commencement of the angling season".

It is reported that the season was an improvement on the previous year, the Committee had decided to increase their contribution towards the cost of Hebden Bridge by one guinea!

There were 17 members present at the A.G.M. but no accounts for the year are included in the Minute Book.

(Author's Note): By this stage the Club had established a style of running its affairs: there were four Committee Meetings a year, one of which immediately precedes the A.G.M. Occasionally additional meetings are held for special business, the efforts of the Committee are directed towards securing the fishing rights they have got, increasing the amount of fishing and stocking with fry, emphasis is placed on stocking with fry.

There is no clue whatever as to the size of the catches, we do not know whether members came away with two or three fish or baskets full, but there is no doubt that netting of fish was playing havoc with the stream as one can gather from the references to staking which have been mentioned.

1887. At a Committee Meeting on the 25th March, 1887, it was decided that a deputation should wait on Mr.Downs, the Duke's Steward, to bring to his notice the custom of anglers going to Bolton and fishing above Barden Bridge. (It is interesting to note that Mr.Downs was Steward in 1887. Several of the older present day members of the Club may remember him).

At a Committee Meeting on the 17th June, 1887, the watcher reported that Mr.Tetley was angling on a certain Sunday, and Mr.Bell of Hebden, fishing with a cowl net in Hebden Beck. It was decided to write to Mr.Tetley, "in regard to his fishing on Sunday, and point out it is contrary to the custom of the neighbourhood, and likely to bring discredit to the Club".

A letter was read from the Secretary of the Yorkshire Fishery Board stating that the Board would prosecute in a case of fishing with nets without licence. It was agreed that a Summons be taken out at the instance of the Yorkshire Fishery Board against Mr.William Bell,blacksmith, Hebden, for using a cowl net, and that certain members should attend at Skipton to assist in carrying out this prosecution, their expenses would be paid from the Club funds.

From the Meeting of October 18th, 1887, it is evident that the fish ponds were in use as a Mr.Peel was deputed to look after the repairs of the fish ponds at the Club's expense.

After a lapse of some years it was decided to hold an annual dinner on November 24th, at the Crescent Hotel, Ilkley.

A complaint was made to the watcher that he had not sent in his report. There is evidence of dissatisfaction growing up regarding the conduct of Inman as watcher; on the 3rd of December the Committee reprimanded Inman for his action in respect of a Mr.Dewhurst obtaining a dish of fish about the 1st of October "and that he had acted in a rash and indiscreet manner to Mr.Emsley which was not to the wellbeing of the Club; "that a Committee Meeting on January 25th, Inman was given notice.

1888. An advertisement was put in for watchers, about 50 applied for the post. Mr.Martindale being elected river watcher at the wage of 20/- per week with cottage.

The Annual General Meeting was held on February 18th, 1888, at the Crescent Hotel, Ilkley.

The accounts for the year 1887 are included, the cost of running the Club has reached the sum of £167.18.2. and there was a loss on the years working operations of £31.1.3.

At a Committee Meeting on the 19th July, 1888, it was agreed to fine Mr. Peel 10/- for infringing Rule 10, i.e. angling below Drebley Stepping Stones was restricted to fly only, presumably Mr.Peel had been fishing by other methods.

There is evidence of trouble brewing up with Mr.Pritt; at a previous meeting the Club had received a letter from Mr.Pritt, they had authorised a reply and had now received a letter from Mr.Pritt's solicitors but no details of the trouble is recorded.

At a Committee Meeting on the 15th October, 1888, it was reported that Mr.Tetley was again angling at Burnsall on Sunday, August 5th, and should it occur again the Committee indicated to Mr.Tetley that he would be expelled from membership under Rule 4.

It was also decided to let the breeding of trout rest for the season, no reason is given.

1889. The A.G.M. and Annual Dinner were held on the 23rd of February at the Myddleton Hotel, Ilkley.

In the Annual Report it was stated that the year 1888 has not been one of the most satisfactory years for sport for flyfishers, "this may arise from the fact that there has been throughout the season a most prolific hatch of Light Bloas; in our experience we do not recollect the like".

It is also reported that "there is a vast increase of small grayling which is not looked upon as at all satisfactory and that grayling have inordinately increased to the detriment of the trout".

The accounts for the year are included, watching expenses have been reduced and there is only £2 charged against hatchery expenses. Even so the Club made a slight loss on the years working in spite of this reduced cost.

At a Committee Meeting on the 9th December, 1889, a letter was read inviting the Club to become members of a proposed Federation of the Yorkshire Trout Clubs Association, and it was agreed to accept this invitation.

1890. The A.G.M. and Dinner were held at the Crescent Hotel, Ilkley on the 15th February, 1890.

There is a long report to the effect that the Club is being run as economically as possible but the income is insufficient to meet expenses. There was a discourse on whether or not it would be a good thing to net the excess grayling out of the river.

It is evident from the Annual Report that the site for the fish ponds is not permanent as there had been a tour of inspection and no place possessing the requisite accommodation could be found.

There is a quaint paragraph in respect of fishing conditions reading as follows:-

" As to the condition of the Club water, so far as 'stock' is concerned it is not necessary for the Committee to say anything on that point many of the members are better able to speak. The Committee regard it as a good sign that there are no complaints about the scarcity of fish. They have heard of several of the members finding out where the fish were and in many cases placing them elsewhere, that is a little nearer the heart of the Angler.

It is interesting to note that gradually another style of Angling is coming more into vogue viz. the use of the worm in clear low water and there have been days when the fly did but very little, that those using the worm did very well".

The accounts for the year 1889 show a loss of £9.6.4.

It was reported at a Meeting on the 2nd May, 1890, that the staking of the river this season had been done as quickly and as effectively as possible; (evidently the winter floods shift the staking and the river has to be re staked each season). It was also noted that the Club had lost the Mill Island fishing.

At a Meeting on June 18th, 1890, the Committee decided to report to the Fishery Board the cowl netting in Skyreholme Beck by George Sedgwick.

1891. At a Meeting on the 31st January, 1891, a Mr. G. Emsley offered the Club a site for a rearing pond and subject to approval Mr. Martindale was instructed to prepare the same, but there is still no indication as to where this pond was to be placed.

It was agreed that the watcher should be paid £1 for the conviction of Sedgwick for cowl netting.

The A.G.M. was held at the Crescent Hotel, Ilkley, on the 14th of February, 1891, on the same date as the Annual Dinner. Dinners started early in those days as the Meeting was at 2.30 and the Dinner at 4.30.

The Annual Report covers seven pages of the Minute Book and is quaintly expressed but contains no special news except that the following paragraph is worth quoting " the past season was remarkable for its number of freshes, especially in July and August. Doubtless they told their tale in other ways. Those members who were fortunate enough to be out when the fish were "on" have cause to remember their visit. Some good takes were made and duly 'published', and some other good takes were made and were not published.

Your Committee are strongly inclined to the belief that in the real interests of the Club the latter 'takes' are preferable. They suggest that if the Members are satisfied with the Club's waters it would be well to bear that satisfaction heroically within their own breasts, rather than excite the curiosity and envy of anglers who have not the remotest chance of becoming members - besides at the same time suggesting tothe gentleman of the grey fly fraternity that the streams would be likely to repay he trouble of a moonlight visit".

The accounts are included and show a slight profit for the year.

At a Meeting on February 20th, 1891, the Committee was not satisfied with the site of the rearing pond and they decided to leave the construction of the pond over until the next full Committee Meeting. (The Committee had been offered the use of the Old Dam on Joy Beck).

On the 19th July, 1891, the Committee confirmed that the fish hatchery should be erected and completed ready for the trout ova this Autumn.

Also on the 13th August, 1891, the Committee decided to procure an eel trap.

On the 7th December, 1891, it was reported that 20,000 Loch Leven ova were being purchased from the Solway Fishery and the stationmaster at Skipton had been instructed to wire immediately on arrival of the same.

1892. The A.G.M. and Dinner were held at the Crescent Hotel, Ilkley, on the 13th of February, 1892.

In the Annual Report it is stated that "the desire so long entertained that the Club should have as its own property a convenient and commodious fish hatchery has during the past year been fully realised. The cottage next door to that occupied by the watcher at Burnsall has been taken under a lease by your Committee, and a well planned, and in every respect suitable apparatus, for hatching trout ova has been placed in it.

The hatching boxes are supplied with excellent water from mains laid down in Burnsall by the Bradford Corporation, for which of course a rent has to be paid".

There is an obituary recorded of the death of the Duke of Devonshire and an appreciation of the way he has helped the Club.

There were 50 at the Annual Dinner.

At a Meeting on the 29th April, 1892, Mr.Burrows could not attend due to illness, this appears to be the first meeting which has not been chaired by Mr.Burrows since the Club was formed.

At a Meeting on the 1st of July, 1892, a letter reprimanding the river watcher was sent as follows:-

" Mr.Martindale -

Sir,

Several matters affecting your conduct as River Watcher have been brought under the notice of the Committee.

They think it their duty to lay these allegations before you, and ask for your written full explanation, on receipt of which the Committee will investigate the charges, and acquaint you with their determinations.

1st. It is alleged that you fish oftener than is necessary to procure the dishes of fish ordered by the Committee.

2nd. That you do not spend the requisite time in watching the River, several Members fishing repeatedly without seeing you.

3rd. That too much of your time is devoted to the attendance upon individuals that ought to be spent in watching the River.

4th. That you are in the habit of using a gun in the pursuit of Rabbits etc. to the prejudice of the Club's interests.

5th. That you are often under the influence of drink and spend an unreasonable amount of time in the Public Houses of the neighbourhood.

6th. The Committee further regret to hear that you are in considerable debt in the neighbourhood, which if correct is also very prejudicial to the interests of the Club.

Before expressing any opinion on these subjects the Committee await your explanation.

Signed. Thos.I. Critchley. Hon.Secty."

And at a Meeting on the 12th April, 1892, "The Committee were unanimous in exonerating the watcher from charge No.1, but in order that the Committee may in future deal with such charges they are of the opinion that the Watcher name the days in his report on which he fishes.

The Committee also decided that charge No.5 was completely unfounded and hope it will never be substantiated, they are also pleased to hear that the charge of debt is not correct and have decided that they can still retain their confidence in the Watcher".

At a Committee Meeting on the 16th February, 1893, it is interesting to note that Mr.George Sedgwick (who had previously been prosecuted for netting in Skyreholme Beck) became a prospective tenant of Woodhouse Farm. He immediately wanted to increase the rent of the fishing from £5 to £10. It was agreed that a deputation should inspect the river and discuss this and other matters with Mr.Sedgwick. Eventually they came to an arrangement of £5 rent plus £1 for his own pocket.

The Committee during their visit were looking for a fresh place for the fish hatchery. It was confirmed by seeing the Agent at Bolton Abbey that the Duke's water was restricted to fly only except that in the grayling season swimming the worm is allowed.

The Committee also met the Steward and got permission to cut down a reasonable amount of brushwood where it interfered with fishing, but they must not cut any branches off trees.

The report finishes "Mr.Geo. Emsley sat some time with Messrs. Crowther and Woodrow at the Inn and Mr.Kidd also looked in ! ". (The Inn referred to being The Red Lion).

1893. The A.G.M. was held on the 25th of February at the Crescent Hotel, Ilkley, 1893.

In the Report it states that the hatchery at Burnsall under the care of the Watcher continues to give good service, and about 30,000 fry were hatched and turned into the becks. The Committee consider that the stock of fish is well kept up and the length under the control of the Club is as well (if not better) stocked than ever it has been.

There was a slight loss on the years workings. The Club sent a letter of appreciation to Mr.Crabtree thanking him for his services. Mr.Crabtree had been forced to retire to Morecambe for health reasons.

Author's Note: * The late Mr.Sedgwick was the father of the present Mrs.Harold Gill who still lives at Woodhouse.

There was a Meeting at Leutchers Restaurant, Bradford, on the 23rd of March, 1893, when the Committee decided to open a banking account and make payments by cheque.

They also noted that the farmers would like their rents earlier than July, which had been the previous practice.

The Committee managed to secure Mill Island fishing by-bidding £4.1.0. which was considered a high price but very desirable fishing for the Club.

It was also thought necessary that an inspection of the river banks should be made annually before the commencement of the season to see that brushwood was thinned by the river side, that grips were cut in boggy places and stiles in good order. This inspection took place and the members walked from Barden Bridge to Burnsall and were very pleased to find everything in such good order.

Mr.Bell, the blacksmith at Hebden, was again giving trouble, as on August 24th, he was reported as fishing from Mr.Proctor's land, opposite Lythe and he was warned that proceedings would be taken against him if he was found fishing again.

On September 13th a letter was written to riparian owners to the effect that due to the low state of the river it had been found impossible to provide them with their usual dish of trout.

At a Committee Meeting on September 21st, it was suggested that dishes of fish for the riparian owners should be obtained by means of the net but it was thought unnecessary so to do.

A matter of discord had arisen with the watcher, Martindale, over a house; he had been turned out of his cottage which he rented at £10 per annum and wanted to take a larger house from Mr.Stockdale at £13 per annum. But the Committee decided not to accept responsibility for this tenancy and in the interests of the Club called for a termination of the engagement of Mr.Martindale as watcher.

At a Meeting on September 21st the Committee had a request before them from Mr.Sedgwick to contribute £10 towards the cost of removing the Suspension Bridge from its present position to a point higher up the river.

It was also decided not to hatch any ova this season but that the Club might purchase some yearlings in the Spring.

On October 12th the Committee refused to give a testimonial asked for by Martindale.

Various people were interviewed for the position of Watcher, but at a Meeting at Leuchers, Bradford, on December 7th, it was reported that Mr.Moore of Hebden had been appointed for a month from Monday, November 20th, at 18/- per week. The present Meeting appointed Moore as a regular Watcher subject to a months notice on either side; this was the commencement of the Club's association with the Moore family which went on for so many years.

At the same Meeting a letter was read from the Rector of Burnsall who sought to obtain the Club as guarantors along with others in the district for any deficiency that might accrue to Government in putting Burnsall on the Telegraph Communication. The amount required was £21 per year for 7 years and the club decided to become guarantors to the extent of £5 per year.

The question of moving the Suspension Bridge at Woodhouse came up again. Apparently there was an objection to it being moved, but the Committee was prepared to subscribe £10 towards one for Mr.Kidd and that Major Dawson, Mr.Kidd's landlord, would also subscribe.

1894. At a Committee Meeting at the Grand Restaurant, Leeds, on January 4th, 1894, the main business was the lease of the fishing. It seems that Mr.Sedgwick's fishing had been satisfactorily arranged but the New Inn fishing at Appletreewick was in an unsatisfactory state and it was resolved "that as many of the Committee as possible go up to the New Inn, Appletreewick, on Saturday, January 20th, and have dinner and try to arrange with Ramsden for his fishing". (No small undertaking in midwinter bearing in mind that the nearest railway stations were in the order of 5 miles away).

At the A.G.M. on the 3rd of February, 1894, the following resolution was carried unanimously - "that this Meeting of members learns with great satisfaction that a movement is on foot for putting Burnsall on the list of telegraphic stations…"

In the Annual Report it was recorded that the Members were duly grateful for Mr.Critchley's connection with the Club which has been a long and honourable one, he served the Club for 17 years as it's Secretary and a letter of appreciation, suitably bound, would be sent to Mr.Critchley.

It is explained that the reason that no fish rearing was carried out during the season was due to the fact that the tenancy of

the cottage used for the hatching boxes terminated and no other suitable place was found, also the change of river watcher took place just at a time when the ova was usually laid down.

1893 had evidently been an excellent fishing season as the following paragraph quoted will show -

" As to the character of the sport for the last season the Committee disclaim all responsibility under that head, they will not even attempt to characterise it for they believe that last season has impressed itself indelibly into the memory of every man who carried a rod".

The Committee also congratulate themselves on getting the river staked, over 300 stakes were put in at a cost of £6.

It was pointed out that on the 30th April next the Club will have maintained its majority. Quaintly expressed "It is not now the babe that it was at its birth - that would be opposed to the course of Nature. In extent of river it has grown at bothe ends, having crept upwards as far as Linton Stepping Stones and stretched downwards to Barden Bridge. Its limit of Membership was 30, it has now increased to 50. Its annual subscription was a guinea, that has now swollen to twice its size. The fee for admission was then 21/-, now gentlemen who receive the honour of election to this highly desirable and well accustomed length, mark their gratitude by a deposit of three times that amount.

Then the Treasurer often appeared at the Annual Meeting with worse than empty pockets, and a very dolefull countenance. Now our Treasurer comes up with smiling face, but trying to shake down the bulge in his pocket, lest it should be thought to be a reflection upon his ability as a financier that it should be so large. As to the then and now of the number of fish in the length, perhaps that report had better be left until after dinner.

Of the Members then and now two only remain. The veteran professor at Barden Tower, as you will observe by a reference to the list, very fittingly occupies the proud position of Father. His nephew William Birch of Eastby keeps him company and all we follow in their train, some close on, others at a great distance in more ways than one.

As to the future of the Club, it is not for anyone to predict, but so far as present appearances go there is not the slightest ground for' uneasiness - never were its prospects better, never were its rights so strongly assured and certified by legal and friendly arrangements, never were its members more united or more cordial in their relations one with another, never did the Club stand in better favour in the dale, and in simple justice it may be added, never had the Club a Committee more anxious to further its interests than the one which now goes out of office with the close of this report".

(Author's Note):- At this stage it is interesting to contemplate to what extent the conditions of the 1890's compare with those of today.

The nearest rail head was Bolton Abbey. (The extension of the railway to Grassington was not open until 1903), the quickest way of getting fishing would be to detrain at Bolton Abbey and cycle to Barden, but it is hard work (I tried it during the War when petrol was scarce; it was difficult to put in more than 3 or 4 hours fishing in the day). The local members had a tremendous

advantage in access to the water but I suspect that most members took time off and spent several days fishing by staying in the locality. As fishing was not allowed on the Sunday the inference is that the period of residence would be Monday to Saturday. Lists of suitable places for Members to stay were appended in the Annual Report for 1887, these were as follows:-

Mr.S.Lister, Barden Tower.
Mr.George de Maine, Fold House,Drebley.
Mr.Chapman, New Inn,Appletreewick.
Mr.J.A.Bland, Woodhouse, Nr.Burnsall.
Mr.J.Thompson, Red Lion, Burnsall.
Mr.Brown, Lythe House, Hebden.

Motor cars have spoilt some of the pleasure of fishing because we go for a day only and do not get a complete break. For example: Monday, April 17th, 1972; I arrived at the water's edge at 11 a.m. set my two grandchildren fishing downstream from Burnsall Bridge, and arranged to meet them at Dibb Beck between 3 and 3.30. Taking my car to Woodhouse I took up station at Dibb End Pool intending to have a leisurely day and fish when I felt inclined. It seemed an ideal early Spring fishing day, most of the time it was warm enough to fish without a top coat, the water was at an ideal height, the sun shone at times, the only complaint was that a wind was blowing down and across stream into my face so that I could not fish below Dibb Pool upstream. Nevertheless I felt sure we should catch some fish under the existing conditions. The result was that I had two rises, one fish I hooked, which I think was a good one, I played it hard, too hard, forgetting that fish have tender mouths at the beginning of the season, and lost it.

My grandchildren fished hard and methodically but apart from odd rises caught nothing. A disappointing day from a fishing point of view but a wonderful day in other respects. For quite 5 minutes I watched a Tree Creeper walking up the stones of the remaining tower of the Suspension Bridge, searching in every crack for food. I heard the call of the Curlew, saw a pair of Redshanks which were nesting somewhere upstream, a Dipper flew past and I watched a brightly coloured cock Chaffinch catching flies in the air; the Wagtails were not on the scene as yet; I saw three Mallard Duck, a Sandpiper and some Blue Tits. On the flat above Dibb End there were a number of gulls, mostly black headed, when one sees gulls on the water it is sometimes a sign that the Stone Fly is hatching, but it was too early for the Stone Fly and in any case the flat above Dibb End is snot one of the Stone Fly hatching places, they must have been feeding on something else.

Rooks and jackdaws were flying over all day, far too many of them, it was interesting to watch a rook flying straight towards you then it caught sight of one's face and immediately swerved and took evasive action, not one came within gun shot distance.

I missed seeing the Jenny Wrens and the Long Tailed Tits. I remember one winter in the same vicinity counting 17 Long Tailed Tits in a tree; I have been told that in winter the Long Tailed Tits and Jenny Wrens congregate in numbers and semi-hibernate in a nest in clutches so that the collective body heat keeps them warm during the cold weather, the wrens' winter nest being known as a "cock wrens nest". I have no first hand evidence of this but I can confirm that Long Tailed Tits form a colony in winter.

It was a perfectly clear day, the hills looked magnificent; viewed from my restricted corner nothing has changed in a hundred years - what a wonderful asset it is in these busy times to be able to find such a secluded piece of country, I never saw a single person until my grandchildren joined me.

CHAPTER II.

The Development of Tackle.

Fly Rods.

The first Wharfe fishermens' rods I came across were 11 and 12 ft. specimens, greenhart top with whole bamboo middle and butt; I believe they cost 16/- each and Harry Carr of Kirkstall Road, Leeds, was a specialist in making these rods. By today's standards they were crude monstrosities but we have got to remember that before the days of oil dressed lines hair lines were used and the rods had to be made to cast this type of line. To divert for a moment: the line started with a single hair at the point, then. two hairs twisted together in opposite directions so that they clung round each other, then three hairs plaited and the plaiting projected until six or more hairs were used for the remainder of the line. A line of this type was limited to say 15 ft. from the tip of the rod to the point fly, 12 ft. down the rod with say 6 ft. spare on the reel, making 33 ft. in round figures. (With care and replacement of broken hairs these lines would last many seasons).

With the introduction of fibre glass rods I have only just realised that to get a rod to flex and cast one is dependent on either the weight of the line or the weight of the tip, as the hair lines had very little weight one was dependent on a heavy tip of greenhart which caused the bamboo middle and butt to flex. Though the hair line had very little weight it had a tendency to lie straight. Also because the reel was more in the sense of a line adjuster and was not designed to pay out line to a fighting fish one was dependent on the rod flexing to take up the shocks, hence all the old advice to 'keep the rod point up' so that the rod would bend to meet the plunges of the fish. Fishing fine was necessary even in those days, the point fly was tied to the single hair, the first dropper was rather a long single hair looped into the knot where the twisted hairs started,and the top dropper was a long length of hair high enough up the line so that the fly only bobbed on the water. The maximum length of line that could be controlled under these conditions was 3 to 6 ft. longer than the length of the rod. The first reason being that the line had to be suspended in a catenary to make the top fly bob, secondly if a sizeable fish was hooked in rough water it had got to be got to the net before it had time to fight. A fisherman carried a long handled non-folding net on a 6 ft. staff; on hooking a fish up went the rod point, out went the net and the fish was creeled before it had time to realise what had happened. Lots of good fish were lost by breakage: it was so easy to strike too hard with a long heavy topped rod, and if the fish got below you in rough water on a single hair, with little or no pay out on the reel, it put all the chances in favour of the fish.

Partly, so that the fisherman had the help of the stream to bring the fish in, partly because it was the best way to handle three flies without 'lining' the fish with the coarse line, but mainly to approach the fish from a position where the fisherman was out of sight, nearly every good fisherman fished upstream; at least in low water conditions and when there was not a downstream wind which made upstream casting difficult, if not impossible.

Taken all round, with the limited materials available, this was a very good fishing outfit. Later the hair line was replaced by an

oil dressed one, the extra weight which had to be handled at the rod tip made casting all day, with a single handed 12 ft. rod, an almost impossible performance.

Long before the above described outfit went out of use silkworm gut had come into use with split cane rods. In general the Wharfe fishermen were not as successful as those who used the older methods and the split cane men mostly fished downstream. I knew one exception, that was H.H. Edmunds, the joint author of "Brook and River Trouting", though he had changed to a split cane rod I think he still used a hair cast.

A few visitors who had had chalk stream experience tried dry fly fishing but without a great deal of success, possibly they were in the habit of stalking rising fish and could not get used to trying all the likely places. Anyhow the general opinion was that the dry fly was no good on the Wharfe.

The foregoing applied to tackle and the method of fishing up to about 1925, then a new school came along who found that a dry fly fished in likely places produced results, later still with the advent of the Air-Cel line upstream wet fly fishing came back into use but using a shorter rod.

I believe there is another change which has taken place almost unnoticed, the old time fishermen used to complain that gut was no use in low water conditions as it was more noticeable to the fish than hair; but with the advent of nylon, which is supposed to have the same refractive index as water, fishermen have gained a distinct advantage. In addition of course nylon is much stronger than hair of comparative diameter so we are able to fish finer.

Fly Reels.

In the Charles Cotton section of The Compleat Angler he indicates that there were such things as reels. When I started fishing the Hardy Perfect Reel was in existence, at a price. The average reel was a poor affair and although Hardys marketed cheaper models they soon wore out if they were used hard. Of late years there has been an improvement in reels, one can buy reels which are firstclass engineering jobs,inexpensive and functionally serviceable: at last the tackle maker realises that we need a reel with plenty of spare line capacity so that it does not jam when a line gets slack with a large diameter drum for quick recovery. Also one can get reels with a live rim so that a light check can be used with the facility of additional braking by finger pressure on the rim.

Hair, Gut and Nylon.

There are two reasons why the use of hair has disappeared, firstly due to its inferior strength compared with gut and secondly because it was no longer obtainable. Only stallions were allowed to grow their tails long, the method of obtaining a tail was to find a stallion put out to grass with a good coat and a well combed tail, wait for a dark night and clip off its tail; not only was finding a suitable patient a difficult job but operating in the dark at the rear end of a stallion must have been quite a tricky business. Moreover as the stallion was probably the pride and joy of some farming squire hell would be let loose when the following day he found his horse without a tail; and, as trout fishers were not numerous suspicion was bound to be focussed on the culprit however good his alibi.

Having been successful in getting a good tail the docked end was dipped in pitch, the tail folded and stored in a pig's bladder; kept in this manner there was enough hair to supply a fisherman's requirements for a lifetime. The other way of getting hair was to become friendly with a groom with a stallion in his stable and clip off hairs one or two at a time, as and when required, until the groom caught you at it and stopped the source of supply. Hair which was available for purchase was hair which had been combed out and was dead hair devoid of natural oil, brittle and weak compared with live hair. I never had an opportunity of using live hair and suspect that the reputation of hair for breaking was due to dead hair being mostly in use.

The great advantage of hair seemed to me to be the way the droppers stand out at right angles to the cast for heavy fish hair cannot compare with the strength of silkworm gut, but for fly fishing for small fish I think that hair (had it been available) would have stayed in use until the introduction of nylon.

Having used gut for years without any real alternative one did not realise its shortcomings until nylon became available. The need to soak gut before using did not seem to be a nuisance, casts were easily knotted for repairs and if a cast was well soaked then held taut against the rod for a few minutes by hooking the fly into the eye at the butt, the cast would dry straight and stay straight for the rest of the day.

The invention of nylon seemed to provide the fisherman with the perfect link between the hook and the line, except that nylon has a low co-efficient of friction, this no doubt is an advantage for many applications but not for casts as a knot is a friction joint.

Hooks.

Cholmodely Pennel writing in "The Badminton Library" in 1885 forecast that the then new eyed hook would take over. In spite of this straight shanked hooks on the Wharfe saw the hair era out. The reason for the change was that flies tied to gut were wasted when the gut rotted. For small sparsely dressed North Country flies the straight shanked hook makes a neater job, nylon which is rot proof enables straight shank hooks to be used again. It seemed to me that the points on hooks with eyes were never so needle sharp as those with straight shanks but I believe that recently eyed hooks have improved in this respect.

Flies.

In earlier times the expert Wharfe fishermen tended to keep the contents of his flybook secret. Once by accident I got a glimpse of one of these flybooks which was filled with perfect examples of the fly dressers art. For materials they had available feathers from birds which are now protected, and silks from local mills: to this extent the old timers had an advantage. Today it is difficult to get satisfactory wet flies suitable for the Wharfe unless you dress your own. The standard patterns of dry flies were too heavily dressed for our river until recently when a much more suitable selection has become available.

Creels.

A receptacle for fish is an essential item of equipment and the type chosen seems to stamp the owner as "a local", "an old hand", " a visitor" or "a novice".

The original Wharfe fishers' creels were insanitary affairs, though durable, made from leather (examples of these can be seen in "The Flyfishers' Club)." Later these were replaced by wooden fish boxes, these were ideal for the days when all fish caught were kept and a good day would yield 30 fish or more. Some of these boxes are still in use, a few 21.

are magnificent pieces of craftsmanship, made from mahogany or oak and curved to fit snug on the back. I think that the wicker basket is the best creel for keeping fish in good condition but it is so difficult to keep clean; for my own use I have made an aluminium box slung from a leather rifle sling, rather a clumsy effort but it has the advantage of being easily cleaned after use.

Modern fishing bags, even those with removable linings, are,not satisfactory; somehow or other the fish manage to get bent or crushed. The custom of some anglers of putting fish into an independent cellophane bag is far too lengthy a process when the rise may only last for 10 minutes.

CHAPTER III.

The Club's History Continued.

1894. In 1894 there were Committee Meetings on February 12th, April 5th, May 7th and September 13th.

1895. And in 1895 on January 14th, the A.G.M. being held at the Crescent Hotel, Ilkley, on February 9th, 1895.

The contemplated visit of the Committee to the New Inn took place. The Committee had dinner and then tackled the landlord with a view to obtaining his fishing: this proved abortive. The most they could get was that Mr.Ramsden promised he would not let the fishing to any other Club and in return for 10 tickets for his own length he would let members fish his stretch, though he would expect them to patronise his house. These terms were accepted: it was also decided that the Club, or some of its members, should contribute to the necessary expense incurred in giving the inhabitants of Appletreewick a dinner to commemorate the introduction of the electric telegraph into the village. (Ramsden must have been a hard case or the Committee did themselves well at dinner).

The attendance record of the Committee was reported for the first time, in the previous year there had been ten Meetings, two members had attended all ten, three - nine, another five, the remainder under five, (which considering the transport conditions in those days must have meant that the Committee was very enthusiastic).

It was arranged that the Watcher should keep a supply of minnows,and agreed that he should sell them to members at 1/- per score.

It was agreed that Mr.Albert Edward Carr should stand first upon the list of accepted candidates. A note has been added in the Minute Book at a later date reading "this man was admitted but shuffled from time to time paying his entrance fee and sub. and ultimately withdrew Spring of '94."

1000 yearling trout from the Lunesdale Hatchery were introduced on March 7th without the loss of a single fish, the total cost being £12.13.8.

The Mill Island fishing was taken again, this time at a reduced price of £3, but it was considered advisable to let certain selected 'natives' have leave to fish this stretch and tickets would be provided with certain regulations covering this privilege.

A complaint was received of the annoyance of a 5/- day ticket member fishing minnow in front of a fly fisher and it was decided that in future 5/- day ticket holders should be restricted to fly only.

It was reported that on April 24th Mr.Sylvester Jun. had caught a dish of 25 fish for Mr.William de Maine in return for the oak timber, sufficient for four or five stiles, which that gentleman had given to the Club. (The main members of most of these stiles are still there, I have repaired some of the rungs - 77 years and still serviceable, speaks well for the weathering qualities of oak). This brought out the question of the size of the dishes of fish which should be given to riparian owners and it was decided no dish should exceed 5lbs in weight.

Procuring dishes of fish for riparian owners was beginning to present some difficulty as it was recorded that on September 6th the Duke's keeper, Holmes, caught a dish with a net which was sent to Mr.George Emsley, but there were still riparian owners to supply, on August 31st Holmes had netted Barden Bridge Pool for the Hall and got about 40 fish.

At the Committee Meeting on January 14th the death of Mr.Burrows was recorded, who had been Chairman since the outset of the Club.

At the A.G.M. on February 9th, 1895, Rule 7 was altered and the minimum size limit for fish was increased from 7" to 8". This brought the size limit into line with that operating in the Bolton Abbey water. Also it was agreed that no day tickets should be issued until May 1st.

The Annual Dinner was held on the same date, 34 members attended, there is a note to the effect that the day was very cold and there was much snow up the dales, several members complained of a strong draught to their legs at the dinner table.

1896. Committee Meetings were held on the 25th March, 31st October,1895, and on January 20th, 1896.

The A.G.M. and Dinner being held on the 22nd February, 1896.

The Club received a letter from Mrs.Hird of Hebden informing the Secretary that she had had an offer for her water of more than the Club gave, and the lowest figure she would accept was £3 per annum; members of the Committee were deputed to see her and point out that £2 per year was good payment for two field lengths and declined to give more. In the end Mrs.Hird decided to rent her fishing to the Club.

There was considerable difficulty in finding a suitable cottage for Moore. The Club were also finding difficulty in getting dishes of fish for the riparian owners and they had to get the help of the Duke's netters to net Hough Lumb to provide fish for five riparian owners. Poaching by netting was still a problem as there is a note that on June 20th and 21st 200 stakes were put in above Drebley Stepping Stones up to Burnsall Bridge.

Notices were posted on the right bank to the effect that 'there is no public foot path along the riverside, stiles are for the convenience of anglers'.

At the Meeting prior to the A.G.M. the Treasurer reported that there was going to be a debit and it was decided to increase the subscription from 2 gns. to 3 gns. this was confirmed at the A.G.M. but was only just carried as 10 were in favour and 6 against.

There is a pertinent note about the Dinner reading as follows:-

"Held at the Crescent Hotel, Ilkley. Day dry but cold wind. Roads in very good condition. Moon full. Dinner commenced just after 5.30, price 4/- each".

It was reported that the Otley Club had instituted proceedings at Law against an Otley manufacturer for polluting the river Wharfe and although the Club had won the case their expenses incurred were exhausted without meeting their liabilities; it was suggested it would be brotherly on behalf of our Club to vote some assistance from the funds as the Otley Club had indirectly done good to all angling clubs in the district. There was a whip round amongst members present which produced £3.3.0

1897. Committee Meetings were held on April 30th, October 1st, 1896,and in 1897 on January 18th. The A.G.M. being held at the Middleton Hotel,Ilkley,on February 13th, 1897.

It was reported that the rearing pond had been made in Hag Wood by permission of the Duke's Steward, two conditions being attached to the permission: 1) that the work should be done to the satisfaction of the Duke's Agent. 2) that the ground should be restored to its original state if called upon to do so. (Incidentally this clause is still in the Club's lease for the Duke's water).

In return for helping the Otley Club financially over their Law case the Otley Club have presented the Burnsall Club with 2000 trout fry. It was also decided to increase the keeper's wages from 18/- per week to 20/- per week.

There was considerable discussion about obtaining a Club room, some members were in favour but others were against because it meant that at whichever residence the Club room was established this would receive the bulk of the patronage. In the end the matter was dropped as no suitable premises could be found.

Evidently grayling were considered to be in excess as there was a discussion on netting them out, but it was decided to allow the issue of grayling tickets at 2/6 per day in the hope that the head of grayling would be reduced by fishing.

The Club has been called upon to pay six shillings and eightpence as part of their guarantee on the deficit on the installation of the telegraph at Burnsall.

At a Meeting held on the 1st of October the Committee were of the opinion that the river was overstocked as it swarmed with small trout, it was decided that no more ova should be laid down this season.

There were 43 members at the Annual Dinner.

There was considerable discussion at the A.G.M. regarding the possibility of supplementary food being provided for the fish in the river, but it was decided that this was not practicable.

The New Inn at Appletreewick was about to change hands, the Committee had not succeeded in taking the fishing directly from the landlord as they had hoped to do, but it was his strong desire that the tenant should let the Club have the fishing, that the house should be made comfortable in all respects for the accommodation of members and all their friends "He has undertaken to make one or two much needed improvements, a bathroom and W.C. and had impressed upon his incoming tenant the importance of especially applying himself to win and maintain the patronage of the Club members".

1898. Committee Meetings were held on 29th March, 28th October, 1897, and in 1898 on January 13th; the A.G.M. and Annual Dinner being held on February 5th, 1898, at the Middleton Hotel, Ilkley.

The activities of the Club for the year are very well covered in the Annual Report, which comments on the lack of fly throughout the season, with the exception that the Green Drake was on -

"and unusually strong for the Wharfe, and those of the members who were on the stream at Whitsuntide and witnessed the hatch of these large and graceful ephemera will not readily forget the sight - it is at such a time that an idea may be got as to the size and quantity of fish in the Wharfe."

Now that the Club has a rearing pond the practice is to put yearlings in the river instead of fry. There has been an effort to reduce the number of eels, six eel traps were purchased and during the first week close upon a score of eels were taken.

The police caught two men poaching at night by means of a light, they were promptly prosecuted and fined £3.15.6. or 14 days,, but the men had decamped and the bailiff took out a warrant for their apprehension.

Staking of the river still receives attention every year, over 200 stakes were put in between Woodhouse Suspension Bridge and Barden Bridge.

1899. Committee Meetings were held in 1898 on the 17th February, 20th April, 17th October, and in 1899 on the 23rd of January, and 9th of February. The A.G.M. and the Annual Dinner being held at the Middleton Hotel, Ilkley, on the 25th February.

It was noted that Mr.Walker had declined to run a conveyance down to the Annual Dinner on the 5th of February last as he had not a pair of horses. Mr.Binns ran the conveyance.

The Otley Club watcher, Mr.Pratt, had been asked to inspect the river and a report was made by Mr.Speckley in which he gave advice on the introduction of aquatic plants, showing how best it could be done, advising the kind of plant and the most suitable situation. He also suggested making 'rests' for fish upon unbroken flats. It was decided that steps should be taken to put some of the plans into operation.

A further discussion took place in respect of netting excess grayling out of the river but the Committee decided against this as it was considered that the riparian owners would object. An assistant watcher was engaged (Thomas Bowdin of Hebden) from March 21st to September 30th, at the rate of 18/- per week.

The Club lost the Mill Island fishing for the current year.

The Club was in funds as it had a balance in the bank of £205.

There was trouble over the fishing rented from Mr.Herd and Mr. Stockdale of Hebden who had let their fishing to Mr.J.W. Binns of Burnsall, without giving the Club a years notice which they are entitled to. The Club decided that while they had a legal right to proceed against the owners it would be unwise to do so, the matter was left in the hands of the Secretary to deal with.

81 fish were given as presents to the riparian owners, but there is a note to the effect that these were taken by the Duke's keeper, Hudson, with a net by night. (This is the first mention of the name of Joe Hudson who was the Duke's river keeper for many years and a character in. Bolton Abbey).

There is a note to the effect that Mr.Kelsall died in May 1898 and that his property at Cracoe and Thorpe passes into the possession of an illegitimate son named Yates, both his mother, Miss Yates, and son reside in Cracoe House. The Fell were trying to get their fishing rights: eventually on September 27th the Yates' agreed that the Club could retain the fishing provided Master Yates could have leave to fish if he felt so inclined.

The difficulty over the loss of Herd's fishing was resolved by Mr. Binns of the Red Lion who had taken over the fishing, giving the Club leave to fish through his lengths. In return the Club gave Mr.Binns 30/-as recognition of his kindness.

It was also reported that the new fish ponds, that is the present fish ponds, would be ready for use in the Spring of 1899.

It was reported at the A.G.M. that much time had been spent in planting a variety of plants in suitable places, but how these had fared during recent floods remained to be seen, but attention had been given to planting willows on the banks at certain points where cover for the angler was desirable, the willows also harbour a certain amount of insect life, it was appreciated that this work was somewhat experimental.

The tenancy of Lythe House had been taken by Mr.Ellis Denby, a member of the Club, so the fishing rights were secure.

1900. Committee Meetings were held on the 2nd March, 1899, 8th June, 2nd November, and in 1900 on the 22nd January. The A.G.M. and Dinner being held on the 10th of February at the Middleton Hotel, Ilkley.

It had come to the notice of the Committee that large numbers of very small trout were being taken from Hebden Beck and it was considered advisable to try and obtain the protective rights for this Beck.

The Secretary and Treasurer had taken advantage of a day ticket excursion to Morecambe on November 11th and had visited the Wyresdale Fishery, a discussion took place with the Manager in respect of the most suitable breed of trout to introduce into the river. Brown trout were advised, though Loch Leven, Alpine Char and Rainbow were considered as possibilities. As a result of this visit the Club purchased 1000 yearling trout for £15 and 5000 ova at 10/- per 1000. The yearlings arrived on the 4th of January, they were a splendid lot, some being over 7" long and some were even 8"; they were transferred to the ponds without the single loss af a fish. There is a note that the carrier took the conveyance right to the edge of the ponds (it looks as if a better road existed in those days than at present. Incidentally the carrier brought the fish from Skipton Station, quite a journey by horse transport!).

The right to preserve the fish in Hebden Beck where it ran from Mr.Stockdale's property was granted for 5/- per year.

There is a memo. in respect of the Annual Meeting and Dinner. There was a snowstorm prevailing all the afternoon, it would have been impossible for the Dalesfolk to have come down had they wished but they had all previously declined through illness, weds (weddings?) and influenza". The names of the guests invited who declined are recorded and crossed out: at a later date a note has been added in the Minute Book, "N.B. there was a concert at Burnsall the same evening". Also another note, "the Dinner started at 5.30, not 6, and all speeches were over by 8.45, the glee party good, we have had better".

At the A.G.M. it was reported that last season was the poorest that had been experienced for many years, this was due to the unsettled weather conditions but it was considered that the fish had thrived. It was also reported that the fish were feeding by night and the river gave an appearance of emptiness during the daytime.

There is a marginal note stating that 10,916 trout licences were issued in Yorkshire in 1899.

1901. Committee Meetings were held on 22nd March, 25th June, 15th October and in 1901 on the 14th of January.

The Annual Dinner was planned for Saturday, 2nd February, at the Middleton Hotel, Ilkley, and the A.G.M. on the 9th February.

A hut was required at the rearing ponds and it was agreed to see Mr.Downs as to whether this should be wood or stone. Sufficient wire netting was purchased to cover all the ponds.

Consent was obtained to erect a small hut by the fish ponds, the hut to be made of stone, the stone to be taken from land contiguous to the ponds.

The Club's obligation to supply dishes of fish to riparian owners was again fulfilled by netting, a note stating 'that between September 4th and 20th all old stakes taken out to allow Hudson to run his net were replaced and in addition 350 new ones were put in'.

A request was received from Mr.William Turner of Burnsall for a subscription towards improving the footpath on the right bank of the river between Hebden Suspension Bridge and Burnsall Bridge, a list of subscribers was sent, amounting to £10.9.6. the Committee were surprised that the names of those who profit most by visitors were absent from the list. Ultimately it was decided to contribute £3.3.0.

There is a note at the end of the A.G.M. to the effect that it had been postponed from the 2nd of February in consequence of the funeral of the late Queen on the 4th, the Dinner abandoned.

The Annual Report states that an exchange of 5000 eyed ova had been made with the Ribble Club. Evidently for the first time in the Club's history they have got a satisfactory watcher as the following extract records, "a word too, must in justice be said for Moore, the servant of the Club, who so faithfully carries out his duties, he must have credit for the making of the ponds, and all the other work connected with them. His unfailing attention keeps the whole machinery in good order and working smoothly".

It is reported that the planting of water plants will never be a success due to the big floods, but the planting of willows on the banks appears to be meeting with much more success.

Membership of the Club continues to remain full at 50 members.

1902. Committee Meetings were held on March 10th, April 11th, October 21st, 1901, and in 1902 on January 9th.

The A.G.M. took place at the Midland Hotel, Bradford, at 3 p.m. on February 8th, there was no Annual Dinner coupled with the A.G.M.

It was reported that the Committee members deputed to see Mr. John Binns respecting the fishing attached to the New Inn at Appletreewick, of which Mr.Binns is a prospective tenant, had been up to Burnsall, and after a long and contested argument with Mr.Binns had succeeded in getting his consent for all Club members and their friends in their company to fish through the New Inn length. One of the conditions was that the Committee undertook to communicate with every member respecting Mr.Binn's tenancy of the New Inn, with the object of inducing members to patronise his house.

This was done by means of a printed circular which contains the following paragraphs:- "The House is pleasantly situated within a few minutes walk of the River, almost midway between the top and bottom limits of the Club water. Mr.Binns is himself an expert angler, and is ever ready to give his guests the benefit of his great experience in the selection of flies etc. His Conveyances run daily, throughout the season to Bolton Abbey Station (a Time Table will be sent to you in due course). Mrs. Binns will do her utmost to make the House comfortable in every respect to all who stay there".

It was decided to add a cement tank to the rearing ponds for feeding the fry.

It was decided to give a dinner to the riparian tenants on June 22nd, 1901, at the New Inn, this was reported at length in the Craven Herald on June 9th, 1901, the report includes the following extract:

"…no doubt fewer fish came to the net than in years gone by, and one member versed in meteorology said he could prove scientifically his side of the question. It was the lot of anglers to start off in a morning (sometimes a most likely morning), everything apparently pointing to good sport, but not a fish astir all day; and in the afternoon down comes a fresh. Now if the fish could tell what was going on some 30 miles away, why should not the telegraph at Appletreewick be answerable for this want of sport?". (There was something worse in store for members). "An enterprising solicitor of Ilkley, in his motor car, was to be seen scaring the grouse and cattle, by flying up one side of the river and down the other, thus creating a vacuum and evolving endless small thunderstorms. Several anglers were at work that day, but not a fish was to be seen, no doubt this disturbance in this peaceful valley had frightened all the fish in the length, and he hoped their legal friend in future would move slowly, and not rush through at about 27 miles an hour…"

The improvement of the footpath between Burnsall and Hebden Suspension Bridge had cost a total of £13.19.3. and the amount received for this work was £13.18.8. leaving a balance of 7d.

In the Annual Report it was again stated that from an anglers' point of view the season will be remembered as one of the worst in experience, due to continued drought, it was also stated that the season produced the biggest trout that had ever been taken in the Club water for some years. Mr.Garnett made the capture when spinning the natural minnow on September 7th above Drebley Stepping Stones, the fish weighed 1 lb. 13 oz.

It is also stated that in addition to the natural enemies, the otter, heron and kingfisher, to which members are to some extent reconciled, that last season there was an invasion of seagulls on the upper length and it is believed they took a heavy toll on the water. Attempts were made to shoot and trap them but without success.

(Author's Note):- (In extracting this record I have excluded the considerable notes in the Minutes regarding meetings with riparian owners to retain the fishing rights for the Club, to do so would make the account tedious, but to prevent misconception I should mention that retention of the fishing is a permanent worry to the Committee, some riparian owners were extremely awkward and it seems as if the difficulty we have with certain stretches still in the possession of the same families must be hereditary.

Some of the rents asked for, but not agreed to, would be considered exorbitant even at today's standards. Various members of the Committee over the years have put in a great deal of work to solicit the goodwill of riparian owners, not always with success, certain pieces of water being lost for a time and then regained a few years later).

1903. Committee Meetings were held on the 14th March, 12th June, 13th October 1902, and in 1903 on the 15th January. The A.G.M. taking place at the Midland Hotel, Bradford, on the 7th of February,1903.

At the A.G.M. it was reported that:- arrangements were made with the Midland Railway Company for members' cards to be endorsed with the Superintendent of the Northern Division's stamp: on presenting the membership card at the booking office fishing privilege tickets would be issued at a reduced fare. (As a matter of interest the return fare from Bradford to Bolton Abbey was 2/-. The privilege extended to other areas, for example the fishing privilege fare from Bradford to Lancaster was 5/8d. return).

There is comment that some ova arrived from the Solway Fishery on the 14th April, this had been in the post since the 11th, half the ova was hatched and the fry dead. The inference being that the Post Office was very lax in allowing the parcel to be in transit for a period of 4 days!

The Committee was incensed because the watcher had caught two youths from Colne fishing from one of Mr.Bland's boats, it transpired that Mr.Bland had given them permission to fish anywhere between the bridge and the island. The Secretary was instructed to write to Mr.Bland and tell him that the Committee were determined to protect the rights of the Club and would take legal proceedings if a similar case should occur, moreover they were prepared to contest his right to put a boat on the Wharfe at all on that length.

The Farmers' Dinner was held at the Red Lion Hotel,Burnsall, on the 5th June, 1902, but the attendance was poor due to some of the farmers having to cut the grass; the alteration of the date was in consequence of the expected Coronation celebrations (it will be recollected that the coronation had to be put off due to Edward VII having to be operated on for appendicitis).

It is also recorded that the new railroad from Skipton to Grassington was opened in July and that the Duke of Devonshire has had a footbridge erected across the river at the narrow gorge just above Drebley Stepping Stones.

(Author's Note):- (This is interesting as it fixes the date of One Tree Bridge. The bridge was washed away in a flood about 1937 and finished up in a field just above Barden Bridge, I measured it up at the time, it was a single piece of timber 18" square by 80 ft. long. Local tradition has it that this large piece of timber was a gift to the Duke of Devonshire from a friend in Canada and was towed across the Atlantic by a sailing ship, but in 1902 steamships were well established and I doubt the accuracy of this story.

The reason for the bridge being swept away was that the river brought down a large tree, the ends of the bridge where it was bolted to the abutments had rotted. It would have been a simple matter to have extended the abutments so that the rotted portion of the timber could have been cut off but I have been told that transporting the bridge from Barden back to Drebley was a problem and the bridge was cut up into short lengths which lay at the end of Howgill Lane for many years. What a pity those responsible for the job did not show a little more enterprise; but of course this was before the days of tractors and low loaders, even so somehow or other the original bridge had been got into Position by horses and man power).

Providing sheltering places for fish occupied the Committee, large boulders were put in the stream at certain places and a Mr.Cooper offered to give the Club a few empty port wine casks from which 'rests' could be made where boulders were not available. The Committee decided not to proceed with this idea but thought that a few 4" drain pipes in the shallower pools might form suitable shelters.

The Club still remains in funds with a balance in hand on the Treasurer's statement for 1902 of £118.0.0.

1904. Committee Meetings were held on March 5th, March 23rd, June 11th, October 12th, 1903, and in 1904 on January 14th. The A.G.M. being held on the 6th February, 1904, at the Midland Hotel, Bradford.

An extract from the Yorkshire Evening Post, April 24th, 1903, by W.Carter Platts has been inserted in the Minute Book, this covers an incident where an angler travelling from Grassington to Skipton by train displayed to his fellow travellers 16 grayling which he had caught in the Wharfe, a traveller pointed out that grayling were out of season but the angler replied that the close season did not apply to private fisheries. Carter Platts gives details of the Law in respect of the "close season" and confirms that it does not apply to private fisheries provided the riparian owner does not object, ending by stating "the truth of Mr.Bumble's observation is that the Law is a 'bass', it would be scarcely likely to illustrate better than by the foregoing extract".

The only comment in the Annual Report worth noting is "that it is hoped that 1903 would retain the record it had made for many years for heavy rainfall, anglers generally welcome a fresh in the river bed but they will all admit that last season they had too much of a good thing". It is also reported that when the river was in condition some members had heavy baskets and good fish too.

It was noted that the railroad to Grassington has had the effect of putting far more rods on the higher reaches of the Club water.

1905. Committee Meetings were held in 1904 on the 21st March, 11th April, 13th June, 21st July, 22nd September, and in 1905 on January 16th, the A.G.M. being held on February 4th at the Midland Hotel, Bradford. Mr.Fred Reynard of Appletreewick was engaged as an assistant watcher for the trout season at 18/- per week.

There is a cutting included in the Minutes from the Yorkshire Post of March 17th, 1904, commenting on the Club's stocking policy, pointing out that for 20 years the Club had turned into the river thousands of fish in the fry stage, but this had proved a useless method, with enlightenment came practical reformation, the article goes on to describe how it is now the Club's practice to turn yearlings and two year old fish into the river: for the current year 312 two year olds have already been placed in the river, there are approximately 2000 year olds ready for placing in the river. The article emphasises the need to improve the strain by the introduction of fresh blood. This is being done by buying ova from the Solway Fisheries and exchanging ova with the Ribble Club at Horton; it finishes by saying that "all the fish while in the nursery ponds are regularly fed, liver, fishcake and milk solidified forming the diet.

There was a great deal of trouble over the New Inn length of fishing as Mr.Binns had been approached by another Club who had offered him very handsome terms.

It was decided that there was a need for stricter supervision of the top length on Saturdays and holidays as it was found that members of the Grassington Club sometimes got beyond their limit.

The Annual Dinner to the riparian owners and tenants took place on July 2nd at the Red Lion Hotel, Burnsall.

The Annual Report expresses general dissatisfaction with the arrangement for the New Inn length of fishing, apparently Mr.Binns allows so many non-members to fish that his fishing is not worth having and the Club is concerned that some of the non-members also fish from the opposite bank; whether Mr.Binns let his fishing to another club or not is not recorded, except that in reply to a Club question as to what terms he would let the Club retain the fishing he asked for £20 which was considered out of the question.

1906. Committee Meetings were held in 1905 on March 11th, April 13th, June 1st, July 24th, October 16th, and in 1906 on January 20th, the A.G.M. being held at the Midland Hotel, Bradford, on February 17th, 1906.

It turned out in the end that the Midland Railway Company refused to grant fishermens' privilege tickets under the terms previously anticipated.

In the Yorkshire weekly Post, March 18th, 1905, there was included a two column article giving a history of the Club up to date, an extract from the final paragraph is as follows:-

"To-day another trout season commences in Yorkshire and flyfishing is not likely to be synonymous with heavy baskets during the early days of the season. Worm and minnow will account for the majority of trout caught today. That is my deliberate opinion. I'm now off to put it to the test".

Shades of the trouble that the Club has had recently over canoeists arose due to Bell, the blacksmith, placing a boat on the water for hire. The Club having consulted a solicitor were advised to get Counsel's opinion, the Counsel's advice being that the Club had no standing as far as the trespass was concerned and it was for the riparian owner to take action. After much discussion at various Committee Meetings the Club were advised to write to the proprietors of the land pointing out that the sailing of a boat on the Club water had interfered with the sport, and that the value of the length was depreciated, and that some reduction should be made in the rent.

At the A.G.M. it was proposed to increase the subscription from £2.12.6. to £3.3.0. an amendment was moved that when the balance in hand at the year end is less than £100 the advance of subscriptions should be considered. But the amendment was lost and the subscription increase carried.

A letter was sent to members from the Chairman to the effect that "our esteemed and diligent Secretary is, by regulations of the Board of Education, forced into retirement". (Presumably Mr.Morrell was a schoolmaster). And the Chairman asked members to subscribe to a fund for a presentation of a Purse of gold.

At the A.G.M. Mr.Morrell was handed on behalf of the members a silver ticket conferring Honorary Membership, and a Purse of £35 in recognition of the Secretary's long service in the interests of the Club,the Secretary was completely taken aback by this generous gesture.

1907. Committee Meetings were held on March 24th, August 9th, August 16th, November 5th, 1906, and in 1907 on January 17th, the A.G.M. being held on February 2nd, 1907.

There was more trouble with the New Inn fishing as Mr.Binns had not handed over £4.5.0. due to the Club for the sale of day tickets. -It was thought that the new Inn might soon change hands in which case the Club might make better terms with the incoming tenant.

The Annual Dinner given to riparian tenants was held on the 23rd June, 1906, at the Red Lion Hotel, Burnsall, the new landlord being Mr.Bauer. A list of expenses is attached, a total of 30 sat down for dinner, the cost:-

Dinners	£3.12.6.
Driver and horse	4.0.
34 Cigars	8.9.
Drink	14.1.
Total cost	£4.19.4.

Bell, the blacksmith's son, and a friend, disregarded the warning as they were reported as rowing a boat on the river above the Hebden Suspension Bridge on July 12th.

At the Meeting on August 9th there was strong disagreement within the Committee in connection with correspondence between the Secretary and Mr.Richard Proctor, resulting in both the Secretary and the Treasurer tendering their resignation, each of the above two gentlemen proposing and seconding this motion but it was not put to the Committee.

At a Meeting on the 16th of August it was agreed that a letter should be sent to Mr.Crowther asking him to withdraw his resignation which was apparently accepted.

It was agreed that a solicitor should write to Mr.Bell warning him that if he persisted in the trespass legal proceedings would be taken against him, but a more practical method was also instituted viz. to put stout stakes into such parts of the pool that the boat could reach.

It was considered advisable to consult the solicitor and if he agreed proceed against Mr.Binns in the County Court to recover the money owing. Ultimately Mr.Binns paid his debt to the Club into Court.

A letter was received from Mr.Richard Proctor expressing his disapproval of Sunday fishing on the Appletreewick length and his determination to stop it.

Mr.Yates informed the Secretary that the Cracoe House fishing was now in the hands of Mr.Jackson who has taken the house, he had certain fishing rights reserved for himself but he would waive them for two dishes of fish a year.

A discussion took place at the A.G.M. and the opinion was expressed that the fish were smaller than formerly (this is not surprising as the limit had been put up to 8" and obviously the river was now carrying a larger stock). The matter is further reported on in the Annual Report and methods of providing additional food for the fish are discussed but no conclusion is reached.

The Committee had filled in an application form to the Yorkshire Fishery Board for a grant of yearling trout, the grant was refused but filed for further consideration the following year.

CHAPTER IV.

Changing Conditions. Fishing Conditions.
The Feeding Habits of Fish.
A Fisheries' Hazards.

Changing Conditions, 1973.

Fifty years knowledge of the river gives me the opportunity to survey some of the changes which have taken place.

Fishing the stretch below Burnsall Bridge for the first time in 1969 season I discovered that the channel between the bank and the island off Daggett's barn was silting up, part of the island had also disappeared. Fish rise in the swirl above the island but they are out of casting distance except when high water moves the swirl downstream and the fish can be reached by a long cast from the tip of the island. The snag was that in flood conditions it was not possible to get on to the island without going over the top of wading stockings. I cheated by having my waders made 3" longer than standard and found that by carefully selecting a passage I could reach the island without shipping more than a cupful of water; I have taken many fish from the swirl, now my private pool is accessible to all who wish to fish it. By the Spring of 1972 the island had disappeared completely.

A welcome improvement in 1969 was the filter beds which have eliminated the discharge of crude Burnsall sewage into the river. A side effect of the filter beds is that the fish below the old sewage outlet are now noticeably smaller ! The filters seem to be successful In eliminating detergent foam from the river, or is it that the washing powder makers have succeeded in producing a lather which is not permanently stable?

There used to be a large elm tree on the right bank about 200 yards below Daggett's barn, the hole in the root being a good holding place for a fish; during one winter flood the whole tree disappeared but still left a cavity which held fish; even this cavity is now hardly discernible. The Stone Pool a little bit further downstream does not appear to have changed at all and there seems to be little change between the Stone Pool and the Dibble Beck junction. Immediately below the beck however there have been considerable changes in the river bed: on the left of the river the tower for the one time suspension bridge (dated 1882) still stands; when I first knew the river the other tower was standing in a position which is now approximately midstream, even the foundation stones of the tower have completely disappeared. The bridge collapsed due to being overloaded with trippers on a Bank Holiday, I cannot establish the date but it was about 1900. The main channel of the river now flows outside the span of the bridge, the one time channel being a series of rock pools, poor holding places for fish compared with former times. A little further downstream where there is an island in periods of heavy flood, there was a good pool at the foot of a tree, both the pool and tree have gone but a new pool is being formed immediately above what I call The Terraces.

The bottom end of the Caravan Pool has been shallowed by silting although still a good pool it is much smaller than it used to be, no doubt a really high flood will restore it to former capacity; the big pool below does not appear to have changed at all.

Before the tarmac road surface was invented there was an era when roads were sprayed with crude tar and sprinkled with gravel; road drainage from this treatment played havoc with the fly life of the river as it produced an oily film on the water which prevented the fly ova from sinking. I wonder what has caused the sparsity of fly life today, the Iron Blue is still there in plenty but why have the large hatches of March Browns disappeared and what has happened to the Stone Fly, though 50 years ago it is recorded that Stone Fly was becoming less plentyful. The fish thrived on the Stone Fly but from a fisherman's point of view it was looked upon as a curse as the only way to catch fish was by fishing a creeper and creepers were difficult to find in any quantity. After the Stone Fly fortnight the fish were so well fed that they were not interested in anglers' lures until the end of June. It is interesting to speculate what is the cause of this change, is it the food supply on which larvae feed which has gone or is it some condition which has upset the breeding habits of the flies?

Some people consider the cause to be the drainage of the moors, which in drought conditions allows the river to run down into a much smaller channel so that the fly larvae feeding area is greatly reduced.

In my view the drainage of the moors, which took place from about 1941 to 1947, with the object of providing more grazing area and increasing the food supply for sheep, has done more damage to the fishing than any other event. In low water periods the Wharfe at Burnsall is a small stream compared with former times. In periods of rain we get high floods which run off in a few hours. The natural capacity of the gathering ground to store water has been destroyed. One would have thought that a drainage system introduced some 30 years ago would have tended to become less effective by now but this does not seem to be the case.

Not all the changes have been for the worse, prior to the motor car era, when walking was the order of the day, at weekends the banks were disturbed by parties of hikers, the sight of a fisherman was a distraction which called for special attention, they would lean over the bank to see what was happening where the flies were being cast: those who thought they knew something about fishing could always tender advice as to places where they had seen large fish rising: One had got to be careful not to catch a fish whilst spectators were about otherwise you had them with you for an hour. Even the sound of line being stripped off the reel created a rush to the bank to see what was going on. I remember one wet Bank Holiday when a little girl peered over the bank and called out "Ee Albert, come and look at this fisherman in the water oop to his cooat", about four diminutive Alberts appeared, one in a very disappointed voice said "Oh, oop to his cooat, I thought you said oop to his throat". It is fortunate that. there are now car parks at Burnsall and Barden and that present day holidaymakers cling to their cars as headquarters.

Fishing Conditions.

On the all important aspect of how does the fishing compare with times gone by, I find it difficult to make accurate comparisons. One remembers one's good days and tends to forget the blank days so that in retrospect fishing years ago was one gorgeous period of free rising fish and heavy baskets: also for a long time the size limit was only 8". The river was rested during most of the 1914 War and there was plenty of scope for large baskets of small fish, this condition lasted into the late '20's. I think the river tended to get over fished in the early 30's and because of unproductive bags many of the members of the Club did not bother to fish after the first few weeks of the season, with the result that, possibly coupled with good breeding seasons, the river replenished itself and started the 1939 war with a good stock of fish, so good that during the war there was quite a lot of heavy fishing by local inhabitants from the point of view of helping out the food supply.

Though there are no figures available to prove the case there is no doubt in my mind that due to ease of access by motorists the river is much more heavily fished than formerly and the natural breeding capacity of the river is not sufficient to make good the catch. The motor car has spoilt the anticipation and pleasure we used to have in journeying to the river. In the early 20's we never went for a day always for a week, sometimes two weeks and on one famous occasion three weeks, which gave us a terrific advantage in finding the good spots and the killing flies.

Fishing conditions are more difficult these days because we have lost one of the easy catching periods when the water was coloured prior to a flood. This is offset by better tackle and a much improved knowledge of 'river lore'. I believe that the top grade fisherman is just as successful as his forebears, I think the average fisherman is better: we mostly tend to use our heads as well as keep our flies on the water whereas, except for the special few, in former times most fishermen belonged to the chuck and chance it brigade.

The Feeding Habits of Fish.

Look into the glide on the upstream side of Burnsall Bridge, not a fish to be seen. Look an hour later and you may see four or five fish stationed in the runs near the river bed, watch these fish carefully,every now and then you will see a mouth open followed by a corresponding movement of the gills, occasionally a fish will move a few inches sideways. The fish are feeding by intercepting nymphs which flow past, the fish are in positions where the energy spent in swimming against the current is at a minimum, some inbuilt sense registering that the energy used has to be made good by an intake of food. If it was not for your vantage point on the bridge you would have no knowledge of any fish activity. The nymphs on their journey to the surface are swept downstream quite a long way, at the beginning of the hatch it pays the fish to intercept them near the river bed but as the hatch develops and nymphs become more numerous the fish can search a wider area by looking upwards, they tend to take station nearer the surface, as the food supply increases they become more active from time to time breaking the surface and giving the impression that they are taking a floating fly, but if watched carefully it will be found that they are still nymphing. Only when the hatch starts to tail off and the supply of hatched fly exceeds the supply of nymphs do the fish start concentrating on floating fly.

Of course rarely does the hatch take place in the simple sequence described, sometimes the hatch takes place in overlapping phases,frequently in May and June there are several types of fly hatch during the day, the fish first favouring one and then another. Fish seem to be particularly partial to the tiny Iron Blue and let pass, what appears to the fisherman larger and more juicy flies; does the Iron Blue fly have a special food value, if so is it due to its high protein content or the quantity in which it hatches?

When a general rise to fly (as opposed to a local rise) takes place on a river it appears to happen over the full stretch of the river simultaneously, by comparing notes with other fishermen even a short ten to fifteen minute rise occurs at the same time; what is the condition which causes the hatch to time itself to such a close limit? There is usually a rise about mid-day then one day there is no mid-day rise. What has happened?

One can understand a wind at evening spoiling the rise as it blows the spinners off the water, but why should an unexpected wind getting up during the day put the fish down? Most rivers fish badly in an east wind, usually a cold wind, and fish well in a warm west wind, but how do these winds affect the hatch of fly? A gusty wind in any direction' seems bad for fishing, but some of the best days in Summer occur when there is a gale blowing. We know from experience of hand reared fish that they get used to set feeding times and except when starved will not take food so readily at other times. It may be that wild fish get used to set times, the fact that on some days we can catch fish when there is no apparent hatch of fly may be due to fish getting into feeding positions in anticipation of a hatch.

Water temperature plays its part and fish appear to be active over a fairly narrow temperature range. Knowing that water is a bad conductor of heat (heat transfer in water is almost entirely by convection) it makes it difficult to accept the belief that fish are put off by a cold wind striking the water and reducing the temperature. The oxygen content of water affects the fish, this too is associated with temperature - but how closely? Approaching thunder seems to put the fish off yet they rise sometimes in thundery conditions. There is no set pattern of events,one incident comes to mind: I caught two fish on the Wharfe just as a thunderstorm was starting to break overhead and prior to the rain. Another fisherman, seeing my success, fished right through the storm,caught nothing, and got soaked while I, content with my lot, sheltered under a tree and then proceeded to catch more fish which started to rise when the rain stopped.

It seems to me that there is a lot to find out about the trout and its habits of feeding, perhaps it is just as well that there should be this uncertainty otherwise much of the pleasure of fishing would be lost.

A Fisheries' Hazards.

It is interesting to list the hazards which affect a fishery. Always there seems to be some other interested party wanting to use the river to the fisherman's disadvantage. These are some of the hazards with which, over the years, the Club has had to contend.

Water abstraction by The Bradford Corporation, impounding most of the feeder streams on the west bank, reducing the natural flow and spoiling several good spawning streams.

The pollution of Hebden Beck and Skyreholme Beck by lead mine working, and in the case of the latter, paper mill effluent. (Now ceased but a potential hazard if mineral workings are opened up again).

Tar from road spraying which killed fly life(now ceased).

The Dam at Linton which prevented a major flow down the river when the sluice was shut for the dam to fill (now ceased).

The drainage of the moors, which coupled with water abstraction create much longer periods of low water when the river is not fishable (still a formidable hazard).

Hoards of people at holiday times walking the east bank (to some extent eased but this is being replaced by overflow of picnic parties from the car parks at Burnsall and Barden).

Sewage effluent from farms and villages being fed into the river. In one respect this situation has been improved as the villages now have sewage treatment plants. In other respects it has got worse due to the use of detergents for washing which destroy the surface tension of the water and upset fly breeding. Also farmers now use some chemicals,mostly cleansers, which are poisonous unless heavily diluted.

Canoeing and skin diving: organised canoeing, which is controlled,we are prepared to accept as it only occurs on certain occasions. The disturbance caused by the lone canoers and rubber dinghy users is a nuisance.

The large number of caravans parked along the river bank: the occupants disturb the fishing, untreated sewage from the caravans seeps into the river which includes detergent washing effluent.

The general view held by the public (and I suspect The Sports Council) is that the river is free for all, yet they overlook that the fisherman has to pay heavily to keep the river stocked and rent the fishing rights.

The ever present danger that some tanker with oil or poisonous chemicals will shed its load into the river. It is generally believed that if a river is polluted it is only necessary to compensate for the loss of fish; the real damage is much more far reaching as it may take many years for the aquatic plants and marine life to restore itself.

Considering the above hazards one might conclude that they are more injurious to fly life than fish. Is the combination of these harmful conditions the reason why the hatches of fly seem to be so sparse?

CHAPTER V.

The Club's History continued.

1908. In 1907 Committee Meetings were held on 2nd February, 9th March, 9th May, 5th September, 30th November, and in 1908 on the 8th February. The A.G.M. also being held on the same date.

At the Meeting on March 9th there is an interesting summary of the extent that the river was fished in 1906/7 season.

	April 1906	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan 1907	Total
Members	59	80	78	61	90	58	18	20	12	1	477
Members' Friends	4	16	13	6	14	15	6	4	4		82
Non-Members	73	138	164	127	250	32	9	6	6	7	812
Total	136	234	255	194	354	105	33	30	22	8	1371

It is pointed out that this is the number of visits as recorded by the watcher and represents the minimum as there may have been some fishing which was not recorded by the watcher. It shows that fishing was fairly intensive even in 1906.

Discussion took place regarding stocking policy, the Treasurer advocated the purchase of 2000 two year old fish but this was rejected on the ground that to purchase these fish now (in the Spring) would probably mean that the Club would only get the weaklings and the ultimate solution was to enlarge our own fish ponds so that the Club would be in a position to stock with two-year-olds. A sub-Committee was formed to look into this matter.

There was a possibility that the Club might get the fishing rights in Hebden Dam in which case the Committee would look into the possibility of using the Dam for fish rearing. There is an interesting record of the stock in the fish ponds on May 9th, which reads:-

The Yearling Ponds were as follows:	Numbers	Stocks
1st Pond	397	2 year old fish
2nd Pond	357	2 year old fish
3rd Pond	483	Many small fish
4th Pond	503	Many small fish
5th Pond	462	Many small fish
Pond in Hag Wood	456	Many small fish
Total	2658	

Fred Reynard had become full time watcher of the Kilnsey stretch and Frank Rodwell was appointed as second watcher in his place. It was decided that the watchers should be insured under the Employers' Liability Act.

There was trouble due to riparian owners with complimentary tickets using these too freely and outside the terms of the agreement, the Committee complained that there was far too much fishing by owners who had granted leases on the understanding that they would also have a personal ticket to fish the Club's water.

The water in the stream which fed the fish ponds had been analysed by the Bradford City analyst and was passed as being satisfactory in every way. The Sub-Committee which looked into the fish ponds reported that they had decided to enlarge the pond in Hag Wood to double its size.

As an outcome of the complaint of over fishing by riparian owners Mr.Batten was very surprised to find that Mr.Newbold's permission to fish the Woodhouse length had been much abused and a peremptory note was sent to Newbold forbidding him to fish any more.

Bell's family was again reported for rowing a boat on the pool above Hebden; a solicitor was consulted and advised the Club to become tenants on the piece of land where Mr.Bell had his refreshment hut and moored his boat. The legal position even in those days was that the only way of stopping boating was by means of controlling the access to the water.

It was considered that there were too many grayling in the water, Mr.Downs, the Duke's agent, readily gave his consent to allow Hudson to assist in netting grayling with the help of the watcher from the Aire Angling Club. Several members of the Committee attended the netting process, there were 4 days when netting took place between September 26th and October 3rd, in total 1671 grayling were netted out. The grayling were distributed in dishes from 2 to 12 to the landowners and tenants, between 65 and 70 persons benefited. The general opinion was that the trout netted out(which were returned) were much smaller than the grayling, particularly on the upper length and that more grayling escaped from the net than trout.

The increasing in size of the pond at Hag Wood was presenting great difficulties due to the amount of stone encountered and it was realised that the work was much more extensive than anticipated.

The Club were successful in getting the tenancy of the land on which Bell's boat was moored, in return for a grant of a free ticket to fish plus a yearly rental of 5/-d.

A request was received from Mr.Carter Platts that Moore might be allowed to report weekly to the Yorkshire Evening Post on the fishing of the water and the flies which were on, but the Committee were of the opinion that this report was of no advantage to members and the request was not agreed to.

It was noted in the Annual Report "that 1907 will long be remembered as one of exceptional character, the farmer will look back upon it with a hope that he may never see its equal, for he experienced one of the worst times for 'winning' the hay that it has been his misfortune to know.

The angler on the contrary accepted the unsettled weather he can look back on the past season as one decidedly above average so faras favourable conditions for sport were concerned".

The Committee, in comparing results with 15 or 20 years ago had the growing conviction that though the quantity of trout taken might not be less the fish were considerably smaller, the Committee came to the conclusion that the cause of this was the increased prevalence of grayling. Further arrangements were made for netting out grayling.

(Author's note).
Joe Hudson. Joe Hudson's name crops up several times as giving a helping hand to the Club, he was in fact the Duke's Water Bailiff responsible for the Estate water below Barden Bridge.

When I first knew Joe he was past middle age and a local character as well as being a good fisherman; he dressed rather rough flies, using his finger and thumb as a vice but they caught fish. Joe had his own particular spots where he liked to fish and of course he knew the water so well that he did not waste time fishing when conditions were not suitable. He also had a great capacity for beer and one used to wonder how he managed to get home from the bar at the Devonshire Arms on a pitch black night to his cottage well up on the hill on the opposite side of the river.

At the time when Joe's family was grown up his wife presented him with a further child - for some reason Joe was reticent about this event. C.M. Sharpe heard the news on one of his visits and called on Joe to pay his respects, much to Sharpe's amazement he was shown into the best room, not as usual into the kitchen. Sharpe tried to get the conversation round to children but on every occasion Joe managed to turn the subject, finally there was a squawk from the kitchen, Sharpe said "what's that Joe?", he replied "dunno - 'appen the cat".

1909. Committee Meetings were held on the 4th March, 26th March, 28th May, 16th July, 19th November, 1908, and in 1909 on January 14th. The A.G.M. being held on February 13th, 1909.

It was reported that the Club had obtained the fishing rights of Hebden Mill Dam in return for a season ticket on the Club water.

The fish ponds had all been wired over and an extensive stocking policy had been initiated.

A pressing letter was received from Mr.Hird for his rent of £8.8.0. to be paid in advance as he was much in need of help, this request was acceeded to.

It was agreed that Bell's refreshment hut could remain on the land close to Hebden Suspension Bridge provided he paid an acknowledgement for this privilege.

There is evidence of some pressure on riparian owners for members to be allowed to fish with worm for grayling, the riparian owners in general were resisting these requests.

By March 1909 there was a bus service in operation as it is reported that the assistant watcher was off duty due to illness and it was thought that Moore might possibly manage to look over the whole length if an arrangement could be made for him to take advantage of the motor char-a-banc which passed down the valley to Bolton Abbey three times a day.

At a Meeting on the 16th of July it was reported that the Club's next but one oldest member, Joshua Hart, had died, he had been a member of the Club for 30 years. Though fishing on June 5th he died on June 8th.

There are newspaper cuttings in the Minute Book describing in detail a cloud burst at Thorpe Fell on June 3rd,1908,which apparently flooded Burnsall and did a lot of damage to walls and fences, and it is reported that the course of the river will be permanently altered, notably at the mouth of Gill Beck in Barden where great deposits of stone have been left which have diverted the stream. The rearing ponds were flooded but Moore, who was on the spot, opened a sluice which prevented damage to the ponds, though some of the fish were lost, also a number of dead fish were seen in the river after the flood had subsided.

It was decided that towards the close season grayling would again be netted.

The fishing must have been good during the 1908 season because 10 dishes of fish, comprising 96 trout and 10 grayling had been distributed to riparian owners, they had all been caught by angling.

At the A.G.M. the feeling of members over the death of Mr.Hart is reflected by the following extract:-

> "It plunged the family at once into deep grief, and this was increased by the fact of its taking place so far from home, and amongst strangers; but the intensity of the grief was much mitigated, and many of the difficulties connected with the removal of the body for interment at Otley were overcome altogether, and removed entirely from the care of Mrs. Hart and her daughter, by the thoughtful and tender services of Mr.Hart's old friend, our colleague Mr.Cooper. That gentleman hastened as soon as possible to Askrigg and immediately charged himself with making all the necessary arrangements. By so doing he ministered greatly to the solace of the bereaved ones and saved them from much pain of heart".

The netting of grayling was a failure due to the water being too high as only 98 were caught compared with 431 the previous year, there were 714 trout compared with 1240 previously. It was remarked however that the trout taken were larger than in the previous year when the small average size was noticed.

The annual dinner to riparian owners was given on June 17th, at the Red Lion Hotel; Burnsall, the dinner was on a Saturday and everyone agreed that it was a success.

1910. Committee Meetings were held on the 15th March, 26th April, and 5th November, 1909, and in 1910 on 17th January, and on unstated dates in February, 1910, a Committee Meeting and the A.G.M. were held.

It is interesting to note that a Mr.Wardle was admitted to membership but a footnote has been added that "as he did not pay his sub. his name has been crossed off."

A request to fish Hebden Beck was turned down as it was full of small fish which represented stock fish for the river at a later date.

John Sutherland, a retired police constable, was appointed assistant watcher on April 1st and had secured lodgings at Charles Ideson's, Howgill Farm; there is a note to the effect that he seems likely to give satisfaction.

The fishing attached to the New Inn, Appletreewick, came up for discussion and it was decided that another effort should be made to see the owner, Mr.Proctor, with a view to securing the fishing.

A memorial fund had been subscribed to Mr.Hart and it was proposed to erect a shelter near Mill Island called "The Hart Memorial Shelter": there was some trouble in getting permission from the Duke to allow this shelter to be erected and the matter was left in abeyance.

Further correspondence took place with Mr.Batten regarding the over fishing of the Woodhouse length (presumably by his son), Moore reported that the visits numbered close on 80. Mr.Batten replied that he sympathised with the Club but he did not think that he as landlord could interfere.

There is a copy of a circular letter attached to the Minutes dated 21st December, 1909, advising members that they have agreed to take the Duke's fishing (sole and exclusive right, except the Duke or his friends) at a lease of £52.10.0. per annum. The Bolton tickets are not to be available above Barden Bridge.

This agreement followed a series of communications from the Steward that His Grace had decided to withdraw the privilege granted to the Club at Barden and Appletreewick from 25th March, 1910, and that he would be pleased to treat with the Club for the fishing at a rental of £60 per annum. Evidently there was a good deal of bargaining prior to fixing the final rental and the 10 years lease, as stated earlier in these notes previously the Club had the privilege of fishing the Duke's water free of charge.

From a later note the argument used to reduce the rent to £52.10.0. was that the value of the fishing opposite the Appletreewick length had depreciated due to the New Inn fishing on the opposite bank. (An exactly similar position holds good today, in fact in Summertime our fishing rights opposite the Appletreewick stretch are of little value).

In view of the increased rental it was recommended at the A.G.M. that the subscription should be increased to £4.4.0d. That the prohibition of no fishing after 8 p.m. between Barden Bridge and Drebley Stepping Stones should be abolished and this stretch should be restricted to artificial fly except in time of flood when only bottom fishing is practicable.

There is a newspaper cutting pasted into the Minute Book recording another flood on January 19th, 1910, due to a sudden thaw of snow and heavy rain; 'according to some reports it is the heaviest flood since Burnsall Bridge was washed away some 30 years ago'.

1911. Committee Meetings were held on March 14th, May 5th, August 22nd, and in 1911 on January 16th, the A.G.M. being held on February 11th.

Mr.Cooper, who had been a member for 29 years and had been very helpful in Club affairs was resigning his membership due to ill health. Th(Committee passed a resolution thanking him for his services, it was intende(to present this to Mr.Cooper as an illuminated address but he declined this offer and instead accepted six day tickets. It is not recorded whether the day tickets were annual or for one season only.

There was further difficulty over the proposed memorial shelter to Mr.Hart. Firstly the Duke was not anxious to have a shelter on his land, secondly the funds subscribed were not sufficient to cover the cost of the shelter. Finally, after several other alternatives had been put forward it was decided to use the amount collected of £32.13.6. as a contribution towards the building of the Burnsall Village Hall. The estimated cost of the Hall had been £700, but the cost was exceeded, the money subscribed was still £300 short of the amount required. There is a copy of a circular regarding the Hall in the Minute Book: it is 60 ft. long by 30 ft. wide and was copied from the school built by Sir William Craven in 1602 i.e. the Burnsall Grammar School. Ultimately the total cost of £781 was collected by subscriptions, interesting contributions being:-

Dance at feast	£3.17.3.
Mr.Bauer's singing party	£8. 0.0.
Lantern and gramophone	10.9.

Interesting items on the expenditure side:-

Builder	£365. 5. 9.
Joiner	£120. 5. 3.
Plumber	£94.19. 6.
Slater	£59. 7. 3.
Architect	£35.15. 6.
Closet	£2. 2. O.

One has only got to look at this well built Hall today to realise how costs have increased. In 1910 it was certainly a good investment.

The Committee decided to make up The Hart Memorial Fund to £50 as the Club's subscription to the Hall: an engraved brass plate was fixed inside the building reading as follows:-

"In memory of Joshua Hart, late Chairman of The Appletreewick, Barden and Burnsall Angling Club in recognition of his long and valuable connection therewith (1878 - 1908) and also as a manifestation of the friendly relations existing between the Club and the district.

The members subscribed some £50 to the building of this Hall".

There is a long account of this presentation which appeared in The Skipton Pioneer on September 30th, 1910.

Though members were deprived of the shelter Moore had contrived to make a shelter from the ruined lime kiln opposite Mill Island, this kiln still exists but the opening has been fenced off.

It was still found necessary to stake the water to prevent netting and advantage was taken during the year of re-staking during a period of very low water.

1912. Committee Meetings were held on March 20th and December llth,1911, the A.G.M. being held on February 10th, 1912.

It was noted that the Board of Conservators for the Yorkshire Fishery District had issued a new bye-law which had been confirmed by the Board of Agriculture & Fisheries that the close

season for trout is now fixed to commence on the second day of October and terminate on the first day of April following, both inclusive, except that in any and every year in which Good Friday shall follow on or before the 1st of April the set period shall terminate on the Friday preceding Good Friday.

The Secretary had inspected the river banks and reported that Moore had done a good job during the winter in clearing away willows on both sides where they had got too big. It is of passing interest to note that a former member on re-applying for membership was granted the same but not asked to repay his entrance fee. Also that a person applying for membership was not able to furnish sufficient information to the Secretary to enable him to be considered a satisfactory person for membership, accordingly his application was held up until further particulars were obtained. In the event the information supplied was satisfactory and he was allowed in as a member.

The Treasurer's statement for the year 1910 shows a balance of the order of £144, it is noted that Income Tax cost the Club 11/2d. though it is not clear on what the tax was levied, also there was a levy to the Poor Rate of 6/9d.

There was a complaint from the Duke's agent that the public were using the right bank of the river as a footpath and he had given instructions that the stile at the end of Barden Bridge was to be walled up and a lock put upon the gate, the keys of which would be left at Barden Tower and to be available only for the use of members.

It was decided not to buy any ova for the coming year as the Committee were of the opinion that there was a danger of overstocking the river.

A complaint was made to the Midland Railway respecting bad connections of certain Ilkley-Skipton trains with the Grassington trains, it appeared that no notice had been taken of this complaint but the Committee were gratified to find that when the July timetables were issued the necessary alterations had been made.

1913. It was decided that members who wished to have a key for the Barden gate could do so by paying 8d. each.

The Farmers' Dinner took place on the 21st June at the Red Lion Hotel, the Treasurer brought his brother, Mr.George Firth, who was an entertainer and the two brothers made the evening very enjoyable by the songs which they contributed.

From the wording in the Minute Book one infers that the Committee felt somewhat grieved by the note to the effect that out of 33 invitations sent out to riparian owners only 18 were present, 9 could not attend and 6 did not reply.

A letter was received from The Anglers Defence Committee, London, asking for the Club's co-operation, the Defence Committee had been formed at a Meeting at the Holborn Restaurant on February 19th for the purpose of defining the interests of anglers who have been prejudiciously affected by the Protection of Animals Act, 1911. The object was to guarantee a sum towards the defence of any angler prosecuted under the Act provided he has used generally accepted sportsmanlike methods of angling. The Committee resolved to contribute to such guarantee if called upon to do so to the extent of 21/- and pay a subscription towards expenses of 10/6d.

It was emphasised by underlining the Minute that the watcher, Moore, was given a holiday from Monday, September 23rd, to Friday, September 27th!

Lythe House was advertised to be let with entry on the 1st of March, 1913, which included two miles of fishing. The Committee considered the question of becoming tenants of Lythe House at £50 per annum and using it as a Club House, in the end the matter was not proceeded with as the house was let to a tenant who was prepared tosub-let the fishing to the Club, though the Committee tried hard to get a separate 5 or 10 year lease of the fishing direct from the owners.

The Report at the A.G.M. states that the rainfall for 12 months as reported in the Yorkshire Observer for 1912 was 43.55 ins. against 28.03 for 1911, whilst the hours of sunshine were 1001 compared with the previous year of 1511.1, evidently it had been a wet season.

1914. Committee Meetings were held on March 17th, July 13th, 1913, and on January 12th, 1914, the A.G.M. being held on February 14th, 1914.

In respect of the fish ponds it was reported that 9 two year olds were found in a pond when it was emptied, they had evidently got up from the lower pond, they had made themselves felt amongst the yearlings as only 231 were found in that pond whereas in the two ponds higher up there were 739 and 782 yearlings.

The Farmers' Dinner was held at the Red Lion on June 20th, the price per head had been increased from 2/6d. to 2/9d. but the total account at the hotel was £5.5.8. At the Committee Meeting held at the Midland Hotel, Bradford, on January 12th there was a contretemps due to two members and the Secretary being sent to one room and two other members and the Treasurer sent to another room, no business could be done but each party independently decided that the Annual Meeting should be on the usual Saturday in February, i.e. the 14th.

At the A.G.M. it was reported that the fishing season of 1913 was one of the poorest that had come within the Committee's experience, the records showed that it had been exceptionally dry, but for farmers and holiday resorts it was a red letter year.

It is reported from experience gained during the last few years that the Committee found that trout reared from ova procured from the Howietown Fishery were by far the best but 5000 ova were taken from our own trout to make the annual exchange with the Horton Club.

It was also reported that the Linton Mill was affecting the fishing due to stoppage of water during certain portions of the day and night while the dams were filling up.

An incident occurred during a very dry time: in one of the deep holes amongst the rocks immediately below the Falls at Linton footbridge a large trout had been seen repeatedly and when the water got low this fish was practically confined to one hole; some of the men connected with the mill set about his capture early one morning, this fish weighed 7 lbs.12 oz. length 27½", girth 15 ¾". This fish was sent to a taxidermist to be set up and the Committee presumed that he is now adorning the front room of Mr. Lowcock's house in the village, the owner relating with much pride how he made the capture early one Summer morning by baiting with maggots.

1915. At the Meeting on March 12th a letter from the Secretary of the Linton, Threshfield & Grassington Anglers Club was read wherein the Club asked for support in a Law case they had against a farmer at Threshfield for poisoning fish in Captain Beck. The Committee decided to postpone action until the case had been heard in Court.

There was a discussion on the shortage of water due to the closing of the sluices at Linton Mill and it was decided to look further into the matter in respect of the present height of the dam wall.

At a Committee Meeting on the 22nd June a further letter was received from the Grassington Club asking for financial help to meet the bill of costs for £14.6.6. which the Club had to pay in consequence of the judgement going against the Club. No decision was made as to whether the Committee would give help until they found out what the Kilnsey Club intended to do.

On the 19th June a presentation was made to Tom Moore, the watcher, to commemorate his 21 years of service. This consisted of a barometer, an oak tray with crumb brush for Mrs. Moore, and afterwards two thermometers, also some sweets for the children: the purpose of the thermometers is not stated

It was reported at the A.G.M. that the Declaration of War at the beginning of August had a very depressing effect on the Nation and took off the zest for sport of all kinds and fewer members were found on the water.

It was also reported that the Grassington Club lost the case of fish poisoning because the Club, in taking the fishing, had not had a written lease.

1916. Committee Meetings were held on February 5th, May 31st, November 29th in 1915, the A.G.M. being held on February 3rd, 1916.

Considering the effect of the War and the enlistment of so many people it is remarkable that the membership list for 1915 only shows two resignations. Obviously the members of the Club were of an age above that required for military service at the beginning of the 1914 War.

At a Committee Meeting on May 31st the first mention of danger to fishing was raised due to tar spraying of roads.

It was also reported that two of the members had joined the colours.

It was decided not to hold a Farmers' Dinner.

The Minutes show that a considerable amount of trouble is being experienced due to residents staying at the New Inn and wandering down into the Club water, they all make the excuse that they did not know they were out beyond the New Inn limit. Their names were taken and they were written to by the Secretary and mostly wrote offering profuse apologies.

It was reported at the A,G.M. that the past year (1915) had been "the most eventful one in the history of our Country, has been in the affairs of the Club one of the most quiet and uneventful".

1917. The War is beginning to have its effect as the only Committee Meeting in 1916 was on August 3rd; in 1917 there was a Committee Meeting on January 8th, and the A.G.M. was held on February 5th.

It was reported that in respect of tar spraying of the roads the stuff they had used was not crude tar and was not injurious to fish life as a whole cask full had accidentally been poured into a trout stream and had no ill effects on the fish.

(Author's Note): It was found later that while the tar did not poison the fish it placed an oil film on the surface of the water which prevented the fly eggs from sinking and did an inestimable amount of damage to the reproduction of aquatic flies.

The Club tried again to get the New Inn fishing on a change of tenancy, the prospective tenant refused to take the Inn without the fishing but an undertaking was given that any guests who fished the New Inn length would be given tickets.

The Club lost the fishing rights of Hebden Beck as a mining company had taken over the land through which the beck ran.

The Club was still continuing to run the fish ponds and the Club is still in funds to the extent of £130.8.11. A 4/-d. per week War bonus was awarded to Moore.

At the A.G.M. it was reported that in the case of members who have joined the Forces, though some have paid their subscriptions others have not and it would be unfair to press for their subscriptions; on the other hand the Club had to go on, at the same time they would like to reserve places for members when the War was over; accordingly a plan was hit upon which has worked very well and with the consent of the members in question substitute members have been found who were willing to pay the annual subscription.

1918. Committee Meetings were held on February 12th, August 9th, December 17th, 1917; the A.G.M. being held on February 4th, 1918.

At a Meeting on February 12th it was noted that Mr.Firth had tendered his resignation as Treasurer after a considerable term of office, this was not only reported in view of the large amount of work he had done in negotiating with landowners and tenants for the fishing, 'in which his car has travelled many miles', but there was considerable difficulty in filling the position due to shortage of staff and people being preoccupied owing to the War. Eventually Mr.Firth agreed to share his duties with Mr. Lee so that the Committee appointed two members to the Treasurership.

A letter was addressed to Mr.Lowcock, the owner of Linton Mill, asking him whether he could defer stopping the water in an evening until say 9.30 as sport is entirely spoilt when the current is cut off as at present when work ceases at the mill. This received a very terse reply reading as follows:-

> "Dear Sir,
>
> We are in receipt of your letter of the 18th inst. requesting an appointment to discuss the stoppage of the river during dry season.
>
> The writer appreciates your wishes not to have your sport destroyed, at its correct value.

He regrets the destruction of fish caused by the necessity of closing down the river, but has no intention of discussing the matter.

Yours truly,

(signed) F.W.Lowcock."

It was reported that on June 29th very dirty water was coming down Fir Beck from Skyreholme Mill, this was due to the fact that mill-board is being made under Government control and although it was drawn to the attention of the Duke's agent it was doubtful whether anything can be done about it. It was decided to prepare a case to submit to Counsel for opinion in respect of the stopping of the water at Linton Dam.

At the Committee Meeting on December 17th it was stated that 'in the interests of food economy the young trout from the ponds had been turned into the river rather than feed them until the following Spring.

Cracoe House, which owned 1050 yards of fishing had been bought by Mr.Wesley Rhodes, a member of the Club, so this length of fishing was assured.

The Annual Report for the year 1917 commences as follows:-

"Our National life is still being carried on under the depressing influence of the dark War cloud and the 'Controller' confronts us at every point".

It was also mentioned that the Board of Agriculture & fisheries had decided to appoint a Committee to consider whether any considerable addition to the home food supply could be provided from the rivers. This caused consternation as members were afraid that there would be substantial compulsory netting, it transpired, with relief, that so far as our waters were concerned that this move was not likely to affect the Club.

1919. Committee Meetings were held on March 11th, July 8th, December 16th, 1918, the A.G.M. being held on February 3rd, 1919.

In the Annual Report it is mentioned that, 'it is a matter for congratulation that the dark cloud under which our Nation and other European nations have struggled for over 4 years has at last lifted and passed away and we all hope never to return'. Then follows a long list of inconveniences and the effect that the War has had on the Club.

(Author's Note): In spite of all the difficulties there must have been during 4 years of war the Club carried on, though the financial balance was reduced the Club still finished up in funds.

It appears from the Annual Report that the advice the Committee had received in respect of Linton Mills was that there was very little chance of receiving a verdict in the Club's favour if legal redress was sought and it was thought that there would be more benefit if the present mill manager could be disposed of.

CHAPTER VI.

Plying the Fly on the Wharfe.

We elect to fish for trout with an artificial fly knowing full well that if catching fish was the only objective there are other methods which under certain conditions can be more effective. In spite of this an artificial fly to catch trout must fish properly and the method of fishing varies with different rivers, so I have headed this Chapter "Plying the Fly on the Wharfe", but I want to be more specific and confine the remarks to fly fishing on our own stretch of Club water.

In general terms presenting a fly properly means that a dry fly, in addition to floating, must drift without drag; whilst drag as such does not spoil the presentation of a sunk fly the fly must drift in such a manner that the line and cast is maintained in an approximately straight line in the plan view, though a certain amount of curl, if it can be contrived,is needed on the length of cast nearest the fly so that the fish sees the fly before the cast. This last requirement is desirable, in fact necessary, if one is to catch fish, wet or dry fly, in upstream low water conditions.

The features which are peculiar to our Club water are:

1. In the main part it is a fast running river with a rock or gravel bed.

2. In most places it is not possible to fish under the far bank by casting from the near bank.

3. A common characteristic is that the runs are shallower towards the banks.

4. The height of the water varies considerably with the local rainfall and the lies of fish change with variation in the height of water.

5. There is little bank cover to screen anglers from being seen by the fish, but in most parts the river is wadeable, it is necessary to wade in order to present the fly to best advantage.

The Ways of Presenting the Fly.

Having elected to restrict one's fishing to artificial fly it is only a step further to restrict oneself to one of the recognised methods of fishing the fly i.e. dry fly, wet fly upstream or wet fly downstream. If one prefers to stick exclusively to one of these methods there is nothing against it, they all catch fish and if you are an expert you will do tolerably well. If you are an average fisherman and want to catch fish then you will do better to adapt yourself to circumstances and use the method most suited to the conditions ruling at the time you are fishing.

The most effective cast, when the current flow is suitable, either wet or dry fly, is with the line at right angles to the current, faster water than the water line covers or when there is an even flow across the river, it cannot be fished properly across faster running water into slower water, so the direct across cast has to be saved for suitable conditions.

When fishing dry fly one is more or less compelled to progress upstream but in spite of the necessity to avoid drag I would not hesitate to cast a wiggley line to a fish that rises below me, sometimes a fish rises to this cast just as drag starts, presumably it is not the ripple which the fly makes which puts the fish off but the ripple from the cast, which the fish may not notice immediately when the fly approaches ahead of the cast.

In former times North country anglers tended to look upon dry fly fishing as a difficult method and of little value on rivers like the Wharfe, today with our light casting rods and floating lines it is probably the easiest way of making a fly fish properly (except in days of downstream winds) and for this reason many fishermen find it the most satisfying and successful method of low water fishing.

The wet fly upstream fisherman seems to have been given a status which puts him above the downstream fisherman, it was considered a special achievement, almost equivalent to the swimmer who can crawl, compared with the person who just swims. Granted in the days of 11 ft. rods to fish upstream all day was a physical achievement. One hears of difficulties in knowing when to strike and missing fish due to not striking, but all this disappears if the flies are fished properly. Upstream fishing is looked upon as a more effective method than downstream but this is not really so except in certain conditions. The truth is that in Summer low water conditions the fish are in the stickles and the only way to approach them is by upstream fishing, and, before the days of floating lines, the only way was to use a rod long enough to fish with the cast only on the water; in fact some fishermen made the top dropper dap on the water. The long rod is certainly an advantage but today I would compromise with say a 910" rod, a floating line, a cast 9'0" to 9'6" long and the top dropper at least 5'0" from the line: even so there is a tendency to line the fish.

The secret of upstream wet fly fishing is to keep the line as short as practicable and raise the rod point during the drift so that the flies move slightly faster than the current; in slow water and across the stream the recovery can be made in a series of short jerks. Keep your eyes on the cast and tighten by slightly faster recovery at anything unusual; in addition to the breaking of the surface of the water look out for a brown flash, the water humping on the surface, a twitch on the cast or a change in the catenary of the line; you will be surprised how often one of these indications are actual rises and not interference of the drift by rocks or weed. I repeat, keep as short a line as possible, keep in touch with the flies by recovering slightly faster then the flow and most of the difficulties of upstream wet fly fishing have been overcome.

To a casual observer downstream fishing is a much easier business, one casts across the stream, lets the flies drift until they are downstream, then moves down two paces and casts again. This of course is the "chuck and chance it" method, during very little of the drift are the flies fishing properly: it will be noticed that rises are obtained when the line is across the stream and again when it is nearing the end of the drift, the only two positions where the fly fishes properly. All the remainder of the water being covered is wasted as the flies are being fished on a bellied line which the salmon fisherman knows only too well, will not provide a take.

The correct method is to cast slightly upstream, let the flies drift as long as the line is straight, then start a new drift just above the finishing part of the first drift by recasting or mending the line. Continue in this way until the area is worked out being sure at the end of the final drift to let the flies hang a moment then draw them towards you before lifting off the water to re-cast. In the slower water the flies can be stimulated by slowly vibrating the rod point. The depth at which the flies work can be varied by paying out slack line until the taking depth is found. In very fast water make sure that the flies hang in the run to give the fish time to see them. There are endless variations of working the flies required to suit the conditions of swirls and currents. Really downstream fishing is by far the most difficult of the three methods.

Which Method to Use.

How you fish is often dictated by circumstances, a high downstream wind and one is forced to fish wet fly downstream. Sometimes there is an alternative if you can find the wind on your back rippling the water of a flat. This is an opportunity to get fish out of a flat by fishing in loch fashion, varying the depth at which the flies sink until you find the taking depth: sometimes under gale conditions flies are being taken on the surface as I found once when some bees were being blown on to the water. In low water conditions one is forced to fish upstream, wet or dry, in order to keep out of sight of the fish.

Early in the day in Summer the fish are often in the stickles close to the bank. I used to think that the fish so positioned themselves during the night in order to intercept the Stone Fly as it crawled ashore to hatch, but I have since found fish are in the shallows in Summer even though there was no Stone Fly. This condition is the opportunity for upstream fishing, the fish require careful stalking and of course you have got to be the first person to fish a stretch because as soon as anyone walks along the bank the fish all move into deeper water. I never lose the opportunity of fishing under these conditions, I think it is one of the neatest ways of fly fishing and the fish one gets are always good fish in perfect condition.

How you fish depends also on the time available and the day of the week. Say it is mid-week: you are fishing all day and you have the river to yourself: the river at normal level; then I think I should opt to start at the top of the stretch, fish downstream until a rise starts, hoping that this will synchronise at a suitable pool, then I should reverse procedure and fish upstream remembering that fish tend to move upstream as the rise progresses from the pool into the run at the head of the pool.*

* Joe Hudson, a former Duke's keeper, confined most of his fishing to a run by some willow bushes: screened by the bushes he appeared to just let his flies trail downstream. Tom Moore, our keeper, also had a favourite spot. Harry Woods, in his active days, would start at Barden Bridge, fish up to Burnsall Bridge and down again to Barden. All three local experts caught their full quota of fish but the two former were in a position to choose a time to fish when the height of the water was right for their stretch, whereas Harry Woods had to accept conditions as he found them when he could get a day off to go fishing.

CHAPTER VII.

The Club's History Continued.

1920. Committee Meetings were held on March 13th, October 27th, and the A.G.M. being held on February 2nd, 1920.

At the Meeting on March 13th it was reported that no order for ova was given to Howietown last Autumn due to the War still being on and difficulty in procuring food for young fish, but 5000 ova were obtained from our own fish, they had all hatched and were doing well.

The Committee received a request from the Kilnsey Club to the effect that they could not get the 10,000 ova ordered and would the Burnsall Club be prepared to let them have 5000 fry; the Committee decided to share their fry with Kilnsey and give them 2,500.

At the Meeting in October it was decided to appoint an assistant watcher, Richard Clark, at a wage of 28/- per week, the engagement to be from April 1st to October 1st.

The Farmers' Dinner, which had been postponed during the War was held on the 27th of June, 43 invitations were issued, 24 were able to accept. The Dinner took place at the Red Lion; added to the Minute Book is a memo. marked "private" reading as follows:-

"Present 16 Farmers. 2 watchers. 2 guests (Mr.Swann.Mr.Jos. Firth) and the 4 Committee. Folbigg's Bill 24 @ 5/6. Mineral Waters and Beer 9/1. Hire of Piano 10/6. 18 Cigars 18/-. 2 packets cigarettes 1/10. 2 Servants 2/-. = (£8.1.5)".

At a Special Meeting on June 26th members met at the Midland Hotel, Bradford, when a presentation of a gold watch was made to Mr. Morrell in commemoration of his long connection with the Club, having been a member for 42 years, and in appreciation of his services as Hon.Sec.for 25 years.

The Club was beginning to run short of funds, the Treasurer reported a balance of £85.17.6: with no outstanding subscriptions, but Moore's wages had still to be paid. This year there had been an unusually large receipt from the sale of day tickets, namely £40. It was realised that steps would have to be taken to increase the income.

1919 was a bad trout fishing year due to the shortage of water, it is stated that this report seems to have become the normal condition for the Summer months. The drought broke towards the end of the trout season and the grayling season was a good one.

At the A.G.M. the entrance fee was increased to £4.4.0. i.e. an increase of £1.1.0. and the annual subscription to £5.5.0. an increase of £1.1.0. The price of day tickets was also increased.

1921. Committee Meetings were held on March 22nd, November 11th, the A.G.M. taking place on February 7th, 1921.

At the Meeting in March the Senior Secretary (readers will recollect that the Club now had two members acting as Secretary) reported that there had been an extraordinary big flood on Tuesday, February 10th, and thought it of sufficient interest to keep a record of it in the Minute Book.

The Craven Herald reported that the flood was not so destructive as the flood in 1672 or the flood which damaged the bridge at Burnsall in 1882. However, the river rose 6 ft.

The Club Treasurer appeared before the Local Assessment Committee to appeal against the rate levied on the Thorpe fishing; it was pointed out that the owner of the fishing, Mr.Wesley Rhodes, got two complimentary season tickets for the Club water so the assessment was based on the rent plus the value of these tickets in terms of membership costs. The outcome was that the issuing of free tickets would be stopped, presumably the Club was re-assessed on a lower rental but this is not recorded.

The Club were in a position to dispose of 12,000 trout fry at 35/-per 1000.

At the end of the General Meeting a resolution was passed increasing the annual subscription to £7.7.0. it is evident that the inflation period which followed World War I is making itself felt on the Club's finance.

An added note in the book shows the subscriptions from 1877 to 1924, these are as follows:-

1877	1. 1. O.	1896	2.12. 6.
1885	1.11. 6.	1906	3. 3. 0.
1890	2. 2. O.	1910	4. 4. 0.
1920	5. 5. 0.	1923	6. 6. 0.
1921	7. 7. O.	1924	5. 5. 0.
1922	7. 7. 0.		

(Author's Note):- The present day 1973 subscription of £35 reflects not only the inflation which has occurred in the intervening period but also the pressure on fishing rights which enables owners to obtain much higher rents for their waters.

1922. Committee Meetings were held on 30th May, 31st October, the A.G.M. being on 6th February, 1922.

It is recorded at the Meeting in October that the watcher, Thos. Moore, had a weeks holiday granted to him in September.

The Annual Report states "that although it was an early Spring the water remained low throughout the season, none of the regular rotation of aquatic flies appeared in any great number, consequently there was an absence of those periods of rising that anglers used to rely on for getting a few fish.

The drought did not terminate until the third Saturday in July but left the anglers disappointed and perplexed.

Great concern is expressed over this change of conditions which seems to be a pattern and quite different from the way the river fished some years ago".

The Kilnsey watcher also reported that compared with earlier years the hatch of fly was very sparse and that the bigger fish can no longer be caught with a fly they have got to be obtained by upstream worming.

Similar reports were coming from other parts of the country and a Committee had been formed to investigate the cause of the serious deterioration of the fishing.

After considering various possible causes the Committee have come to the conclusion "that the most likely one is the use of gas tar in one or other of its forms for making and maintaining the high roads. There is a road on each side of the river right up the Dale as far as Kettlewell and this large mileage of road washing is carried down into the river".

1923. A Committee Meeting was held on March 11th, and in 1923 on January 11th, the A.G.M. being held on the 8th February, 1923.

There was trouble with Hird's fishing - Mrs.Hird and her son having let the fishing between Hebden Beck and Loop Scar to another party while discussions regarding the lease were in progress with the Club. The new tenant was approached to see if he would co-operate with the Club but he was not prepared to do so.

A special arrangement was made in respect of Mr.Perk's fishing whereby Perks -

a) Retained the fishing rights.

b) Would allow people living in Hebden, or any one of their friends staying with them, to have day tickets upon payment of such a sum as Mr.Perks may decide, not more than 4 tickets to be issued on any one day.

c) In consideration of the Club stocking the river with trout and watching it Mr.Perks gives the members of the Club the privilege of fishing his length of river.

d) This arrangement to continue in force until March 1923 and reconsideration of it to take place in the month of February, 1923.

(Author's Note):- My recollection is that this arrangement continued for many years.

At the Meeting on January 11th it was reported that a large trout was found on the bank at Burnsall, it was 23 1/2" long but only weighed 2 lbs. 6 oz. when according to Hurdy's scale it should have been 6 lbs. A further large fish was found on the bank at Starbottom Deep by the watcher of the Kilnsey Club on May 27th, 1922, it was 32" long, 18e in girth and weighed 14 lbs. Only the backbone was preserved, it is mounted and hangs on the wall of the Clubroom at The Tenants Arms at Kilnsey.

The Report of the A.G.M. is short and contains no matter of interest

1924. In 1923 Committee Meetings were held on March 26th, May 17th, and in 1924 on January 10th, the A.G.M. being held on February 25th.

At the Committee Meeting on March 26th there is an interesting account of how a farmer, Thomas Kitchen of Hebden, in cutting a tree down saw three otters, he left his sons to watch the otters while he went to borrow Tom Moore's gun and cartridges. The otters had taken refuge under a tree in the little wood above the Suspension Bridge, he was able to shoot two and the third was found dead a few days later. Moore tried to stuff two of them. The result of his effort is not recorded.

There are cuttings from local newspapers inserted in the Minute Book concerning a high flood in the Aire, Ribble and Wharfe valleys on November 13th and 14th, 1923. Children returning from Skipton to Bolton Abbey had to wade knee deep in water from the Toll House to Bolton Bridge.

At the A.G.M. the Club had a balance in hand of £273.16.4. which was considered very satisfactory and on the strength of this it was agreed to reduce the annual subscription to £5.5.0.

A Special Address was made to Mr.Morrell in the following terms:

> "We the undersigned members of the Appletreewick, Barden and Burnsall Angling Club hear with unfeigned regret that the time has come when you think it necessary to resign your office as our Senior Honorary Secretary. You have borne the burden of this work for the long period of 30 years, for the greater part single handed, and we wish to record our deep sense of the invaluable service for which we are indebted to you.
>
> You have, we know well, devoted your best energies to our interests: your unfailing tact and courtesy have endeared you alike to your fellow members and to the Riparian owners and tenants and have secured that friendly feeling and confidence without which an Association such as ours cannot prosper.
>
> Our Minute Book alone stands as a treasured record of your activities, a record of which you and we may equally be proud; and we ask you to accept this token of our gratitude for all you have done in the interests of our Club and of our sport".

1925. In 1924 a Committee Meeting was held on the 15th of May, and in 1925 on the 26th of January.

The A.G.M. being on the 23rd February, 1925.

It was reported that the Club had 10,000 fry to sell. At the Committee Meeting held on the 26th of January the question of limiting the number of day tickets was discussed and it was decided to take special note of the tickets issued during next season and reconsider the matter.

There was a sale of property in Appletreewick, but after correspondence with Colonel Dawson the fishing rights were withdrawn from the sale.

The pollution of small streams from the different mills was discussed, the river watcher was instructed to place several two year old fish into Skyreholme Beck and carefully watch the result.

At the A.G.M. a long discussion followed on pollution; Mr.Kilburn was requested to see Dr.Wilson and ask him if the River Board would write to the various local authorities with a view to stopping pollution from the washings off the road. Members were of the impression that the hatch of flies had improved in the last year.

1926. In 1925 a Committee Meeting was held on the 21st of May, and in 1926 on the 1st of February, the A.G.M. being held on the 22nd February.

At the Meeting in May the watcher reported that he had found some members bottom fishing below Drebley Stepping Stones when other members were catching fish with fly. It was decided to circularise members on the terms upon which we took the fishing from the Duke of Devonshire and it was arranged that the watcher should decide when there was a 'fresh'.

At the Meeting in February it was decided not to make an alteration in the price of tickets for grayling fishing.

At the A.G.M. the Secretary explained that he had received a long report on the River Wharfe from the Ministry of Agriculture & Fisheries, while it showed that pollution certainly arose from the Grassington Sewage Works and the Skyreholme Beck it demonstrated that the free oxygen dissolved in the water was not much affected by such pollution.

The members considered that this report was satisfactory so far as it went but it did not deal with the effect on the fly and plant life of the river. It was arranged to increase the entrance fee to 8 gns.

It had been pointed out earlier that the Club had now been established for 52 years and some arrangement should be made to celebrate the Jubilee, it was agreed to have a Jubilee Dinner at the Midland Hotel, Bradford, on the 18th of March.

It was decided to buy 500 two year old fish and to send Moore to travel with them.

1927. In 1927 a Committee Meeting was held on the 6th of January, and the A.G.M. on the 24th of February.

The question of dishes of fish for certain Riparian owners was discussed, the matter was left for Tom Moore to arrange, these dishes were given as promised.

Author's Note: (When I became a member of the Club Tom Moore had recently retired but continued to fish with a worm, there is no doubt he would have had little difficulty in getting the fish for the Riparian owners. Members were not too pleased with his fishing activities - towards the end of his period as watcher the impression being that he spent too much time fishing and not enough river watching).

The Secretary reported a recent decision in the Courts where a tenant who had no deeds or grant to the right to fish was not the owner of the right of sporting within Section 6 of the Rating Act of 1874 and consequently is not liable to be rated in respect thereof. In view of this the Committee decided that where they had fishing rights with no written lease they would leave matters alone, as to attempt to get written leases would only encourage the landlords to ask for more rent.

It was reported at the A.G.M. that the Club was in a healthy financial position, members were impressed to look out for pollution, it being emphasised that while pollution might not quickly affect the fish it might steadily affect the fly life and the vegetable life of the river.

1928. A Committee Meeting was held on the 17th March, 1927, and on the 16th of January, 1928. The A.G.M. being held on the 16th of February,1928.

The main point of the March Committee Meeting was to discuss Mr.Hird's fishing, which was to let at £10 per annum, it was suggested that to obtain this fishing the Club should pay two or three years rent in advance, this fishing was in due course acquired.

The Annual Dinner was to be held after the A.G.M. special guests being:-

The Lord Bishop of Bradford.
Sir Donald Horsfall.
Mr.J.O.Perks.
Mr.Downs.
Mr.L.Mitchell.
Mr.N.L.Fleming.
Mr.Percy Charlesworth.

(This was the Jubilee Dinner, though there is no reference to it as such in the Minute Book).

At the A.G.M. it was reported that the Club was £50 short of its expenditure and it was decided that the subscription would have to be increased to £6.6.0.

A letter was read from Mr.Bazley stating that grayling had greatly increased in the Club's preserves and mentioning that in one stream he had caught 80 grayling. A report was current that he had caught 300 grayling in 10 days two years ago.

There was a discussion on the desirability of netting the water and it was left to the Committee to deal with the situation.

1929. A Committee Meeting was held on the 24th of January, followed by the A.G.M. on the 21st February, 1929.

The Treasurer reported at the Committee Meeting that he had a balance in hand of £129.10.0. showing that the increased income now covers expenditure.

There was a request from a member to resign on the understanding that his nephew could become a member in his place. The Committee decided that as a matter of policy that as the person in question had only been a member for a short time he was not in a position to dictate to the Club who should become a member in his place, it was recorded "that his request be not acceded".

At the A.G.M. a letter was read from a Mr.Sidgewick of Guernsey pointing out that the price of day tickets for trout should be increased as it was possible for a person buying day tickets to get more fishing than a member of the Club at less cost. The Meeting realised this was the case and in consequence recommended the Committee to increase the price of day tickets but still kept a differential in the cost, the price to be:-

10/- if not introduced by a Member.
7/6 if introduced by a Member.
Grayling 5/-

Contrary to the opinion expressed at the previous A.G.M. the view was now held that the Club's preserves did not hold many grayling, the past season having been a poor one for grayling, not only on the Wharfe but on other rivers in the North of England.

1930. Committee Meetings were held on the 11th March and 23rd of September, and in 1930 on the 3rd of February and the 7th November, the A.G.M. being held on the 27th February, 1930.

At the Meeting on the 11th March the Committee ruled that the grayling. season be extended to the end of February for members or members fishing with their friends only. The view expressed at the A.G.M. in respect of the price of day tickets was not acted on, the Committee deciding to leave the prices as they stood.

At the Meeting on the 3rd of February the Committee decided that the Club should change its Bankers from the National Provincial to Martins, passing a rider that Martins should be instructed that the account must not be overdrawn without a resolution of the Committee passed at a Meeting duly convened. No reason is given for the change of Bankers.

At the Meeting on the 7th November the question was raised of the desirability of getting further waters for the Club, Mr.Edmonds expressing the view that the time would come when the Club might easily lose a considerable portion of the water owing to being outbid by others and the Club should consider taking further steps, probably in a different district altogether. The Committee decided to keep an eye open for any waters which might come into the market.

At the A.G.M. a member suggested that members should keep records of fish caught, hatches of fly and other interesting data. The Member offering that if specimens of any insects were sent to him he would identify them. It is not recorded whether this offer was taken up.

1931. A Committee Meeting was held on the 5th February, 1931, followed by the A.G.M. on the 19th February, 1931.

It was reported that some visitors fishing for grayling were feeding very heavily with maggots and it was proposed that the practice of allowing maggot fishing for grayling be stopped altogether.

On the question of acquiring additional waters, nothing had turned up and it was resolved that in view of the difficulties of the times to proceed no further. It was thought that it might be possible to exchange tickets with some other Clubs and it was resolved that this should be enquired into.

It was reported that an otter had got into the two year old pond and it was decided that Tom Moore should carry out the necessary repairs to the netting, new netting to be bought if required. It was also reported that the landlord of Fell House was catching a number of fish with maggot and using them in his hotel for guests, it was thought that if evidence sufficient to prove this was found the landlord should be written to as it was considered that his action was a violation of Rule 9.

At the A.G.M. after a long discussion, it was decided that the river should be netted for grayling in April or May, that enquiries be made about the legality of netting for grayling (during the close season) and steps taken to obtain the consent of riparian owners.

Author's Note: (It seems that the views on the stock of grayling held by the river vary from year to year, the position is just the same today).

It was also decided that the day tickets for grayling should be overprinted to the effect that maggot fishing is not permitted.

It was proposed that at the next A.G.M. a new rule should be adopted limiting the number of fish to be taken in one day to 20.

A letter was read regarding the pollution of the river: it was explained that the Skipton Council were making alterations to their sewage works at Linton which it was hoped would cause an improvement.

1932. In 1932 a Committee Meeting was held on the 1st of February followed by the A.G.M. on the 18th of February, 1932.

The question was raised regarding the number of fishermen fishing with the consent of the Rector of Burnsall and it was arranged that Mr. Slingsby should see Mr.Wood and discuss the point with him.

It was decided not to have an Annual Dinner in 1932.

It was reported at the A.G.M. that certain water on the Aire was available but it would mean an additional cost of £220 p.a. and in view of the times the Committee had decided it was not desirable to acquire it.

It was again decided that the grayling should be netted and that members would be advised when this was to take place.

It was reported that certain men were fishing on Colonel Dawson's length on Sundays, Mr.Tetley was instructed to see Moore and get him to look into the matter.

1933. A Committee Meeting was held on the 16th June, 1932 and on the 30th January, 1933, followed by the A.G.M. on the 23rd February, 1933.

A circular from the Fishery Board was read asking members to report the capture of any fish which had been marked by the Board. The Secretaries were asked to write to the Board to offer facilities for marking and also to ask the Board to make a grant of fry or fish.

At the A.G.M. the view was expressed that many more fish should be turned into the river than was customary. This opinion was supported by members and it was proposed to double the quantity of two year old fish as it was thought that the ponds would carry them. The question of limiting the numbers of fish taken in any one day was left for the Committee to decide.

It was also left to the Committee to draft an amendment to the effect that fly fishing only should be allowed below Drebley Stepping Stones.

1934. A Committee Meeting was held on the 29th January, 1934, followed by the A.G.M. on the 22nd February.

It was reported that the Fishery Board had not seen their way to keep on netting grayling as it was felt by them that the Club was financially able to carry out this work itself.

It was decided to hold an Annual Dinner on the 22nd of February, provided sufficient members signified their intention of attending.

At the A.G.M. the pollution of Skyreholme Beck was reported, the Secretary said that he had received a letter from the Clerk to the Fishery Board that he had instructed an Inspector to make investigations.

1935. A Committee Meeting was held on the 2nd August, 1934, and in 1935 on the 25th January, followed by the A.G.M. on the 18th February, 1935.

At the Meeting on the 2nd August the President raised the question of the great increase in minnow fishing and expressed an opinion that it ought to be restricted on the Club's water, it was decided to bring this matter up at the A.G.M.

At the Meeting on the 28th January the Secretaries were instructed to write to the Fishery Board to ascertain whether they had done anything regarding the pollution of Skyreholme Beck which it was stated was in a very bad way.

It was mentioned that reports as to catches on the river which had been appearing in the Press during the last season were undesirable and if there were to be any records they should be supplied by the keeper.

At the A.G.M. the question of minnow fishing was discussed and the view was expressed that it should not be used before June. It was also agreed to write to the Press relating to members' catches and advise them that if reports were desired the information could be obtained from the keeper.

A further discussion took place on the advisability of netting grayling, a certain member expressing the opinion that grayling. were pushing out the trout. It was agreed to approach the Fishery Board to see if anything could be done.

1936. In 1936 a Committee Meeting was held on the 17th February followed by the A.G.M. on the 24th February; at the Committee Meeting the President reported that he had seen Tom Moore who had been employed since 1895 and in view of his health he had decided to retire on March 1st next, and it was arranged that his son, William Moore, should take his place at a salary of £2.5.0. per week and that Tom Moore should be paid a pension of 10/- per week.

The question of the unreasonable use of members' 2/6d. tickets was discussed but as only 26 had been used during the year it was felt that action was not called for.

At the A.G.M. Mr.Lumley, in a discussion regarding spinning, said that he did not think that spinning was doing any harm to the water, he stated that he did not think more than two dozen fish had been taken out last season by this means.

(Author's Note: This reminds me of a situation which existed when I joined the Club - Mr.Lumley's son, then a schoolboy, became an expert minnow fisher, he completely disregarded etiquette, often dropping his minnow in front of a fisherman's cast; he caught large bags of fish when the fly fishers were catching nothing which greatly incensed members. In spite of this it did not prove possible to get the Committee to take effective action).

It was reported that the late Sylvester Lister stated that he held the view that one always saw the first swallow and the first Dark Watchet on the same day.

The fishing on Grimwith Reservoir was on offer at £100 per annum. It was resolved that if a reasonable sum was asked the Committee could reconsider the matter.

1937. In 1936 a Committee Meeting was held on the 26th of August, and in 1937 on the 25th January. The A.G.M. being held on the 18th February.

There was a loss on the years working and it was necessary to increase the subscription to £7.7.0. There was a peculiar request from a member that he might resign his membership and re-join next season without paying an entrance fee, provided there was a vacancy, or alternatively that he should transfer his membership for 6 months. There was trouble with this same member at a later date over non-payment of a subscription, it appears that he was living beyond his income. Needless to say the Committee did not agree to his request.

There was also a request from Mrs. Newboult, the tenant of the New Inn, that the Club's river watcher should have power to examine fishermens' permits on her length.

At the A.G.M. the question of netting grayling was discussed as there was a general complaint that the trout were too small and it was decided to ask the Fishery Board to net the grayling. It was felt that there was too much bait fishing in times of flood, particularly by locals and it was decided to try and get the fishing by locals restricted. Also a rule was passed that all bait fishing below Drebley Stepping Stones would be forbidden.

1938. A Committee Meeting was held on the 3rd of February,1938, followed by the A.G.M. on the 24th February, the author having given, notice that he intended to propose at the A.G.M. that the rules of the Club be altered so that fly fishing only be allowed up to the 16th June. The Committee decided to recommend the members not to agree to this but to agree to an alternative that fly fishing only should be restricted to the whole length up to 30th April.

At the A.G.M. the resolution regarding 'fly only' until 30th April was adopted and a note was sent to the Red Lion and Fell House that visitors fishing the water would only be allowed to fish fly all season.

The Treasurer gave an interesting comparison of costs: "In 1919 the rates were equal to 12/- per member, now they were 30/- per member. In 1919 the rents equalled £2.2.6. per member and now equal £2.13.0. per member".

A Committee Meeting was held on the 12th December, 1938, followed by the A.G.M. on the 16th February, 1939.

1939. It was reported that there was going to be a slight deficit but it was decided not to increase the subscription.

A long discussion followed regarding the allowing of Sunday fishing but it was decided unanimously not to allow Sunday fishing.

Author's Note: (The Club was entering a bad period. In retrospect I believe the reason was that the water was being over fished by certain members who were skilful but put no limit on the bag: other less skilful members could get more rewarding fishing elsewhere and would resign if the subscription was increased to cover the cost of more stocking).

A Special General Meeting was called on March 20th, 1939. It was explained that the Duke of Devonshire would not allow a clause in his lease prohibiting Sunday fishing to be deleted but two

other riparian owners were not in favour of allowing Sunday fishing. The argument was put forward that the younger members had not the opportunity to fish during the week and that most of the angling clubs now allowed Sunday fishing. One member called for a vote of all members but the Chairman ruled that a vote 'should be taken at the Meeting as it was a special Meeting called for this purpose. The proposal was lost, 10 voting for, and 8 against, so that there was less than the required majority.

" War was declared with Germany in September 1939 and we now come to a period where the Club's records are much more sparse than hitherto".

1940. The A.G.M. was held on the 19th February, 1940, there had been a lot of resignations and to raise the membership the Club decided to advertise in the Fishing Gazette, Yorkshire Post and Manchester Guardian.

The question of Sunday fishing was raised again; it was evident that members had changed their views.

There was a Special General Meeting on the 12th March, 1940, in connection with the renewal of the Duke's lease which was offered for renewal at £61 for a period of 10 years, but the Club's balance sheet did not warrant it. Members thought that £53.10.0. was the limit and it was questionable whether the Club could afford to renew the lease. It was considered that if Sunday fishing was introduced the membership might increase and permission was granted for Sunday fishing on the Duke's water, fly fishing only below Drebley.

The Club's finances were in dire straits as the members even considered cutting Tom Moore's pension.

Very strong feeling was expressed that riparian owners should help the ruling conditions by reducing their rents.

1941. A Committee Meeting was held on the 14th August, followed by the A.G.M. on the 16th February, 1942.

At the Committee Meeting on the 14th August, 1941, it was reported that certain reductions in rentals had been obtained and that Sunday fishing should be allowed for the whole of the War period on all but one stretch.

(Author's Note): I remember the period well, the introduction of Sunday fishing did not help one iota (except a few local residents). The war time petrol restrictions did not permit members to get to the river on a Sunday. The trouble was bad communication with members, they could not get to meetings and if they had been kept informed of the situation by post conditions would have been different. In those critical days our job was to help to win the war and one could not blame Club officials for not using their secretaries to send out fishing notes. Unfortunately this state of affairs continued for some time after the war when better management could have helped the Club.

1942. The A.G.M. was held on the 26th February. The Club had a small credit balance of £17.9.7½d.

1943. The A.G.M. was held on the 8th March, there was no business which warrants recording.

1944. The A.G.M. was held on the 28th February, when it was decided to reinstate the entrance fee to £4.4.0. presumably this had been dropped earlier when the Club was short of members, but it was decided to waive the entrance fee in the case of new members who were in the Forces.

1945. The A.G.M. was held on the 12th February when it was agreed to increase the size limit to 9". There was also a proposal that the number of fish taken in one day should be limited, but after a vote this was turned down.

1946. The A.G.M. was held on the 25th February, when it was passed thatthe limit per day should be 8 brace of trout but the number of grayling taken would remain unlimited.

1947. A Committee Meeting was held on the 3rd March, followed by the A.G.M. on the 18th March, 1947. At the Committee Meeting it was agreed that the responsibility for the conduct of new members should rest with the Proposer and in the case of any misconduct it should be the duty of the Proposer and the Seconder to censure the member concerned and if necessary ask for his resignation, however this resolution was not put forward for ratification at the A.G.M.

1948. A Committee Meeting was held on the 18th February, 1948, followed by the A.G.M. on the 8th March, 1948.

Work has been done by Mr.Jack Smith assisted by Mr.Craven, at the fish hatchery.

Author's Note: (This would be the building of the large concrete pond, the materials having to be sledged down the hillside).

The Meeting passed a general expression of appreciation of the good work which had been carried out and suggested that members take the opportunity of visiting the site to see the amount of work which had been done.

There is no record of an A.G.M. being held in 1949.

1950. The A.G.M. was held on the 9th March. The Farmers' Dinner had not been held for some years and it was proposed to reinstate the dinner and hold it at the Red Lion early in October.

1951. The. A.G.M. was held on the 20th March, 1951. No business of importance was reported.

1952. The A.G.M. was held on the 6th March, 1952, only 9 members were present and no business of import is recorded.

1953. The A.G.M. was held on the 26th February, 1953. There was a long discussion on the finances of the Club, there was a proposal to increase the subscription to £12.12.0. and increase the members by 5, but no action was taken.

1954. The A.G.M. was held on the 5th March, 1954, the Club's finances had deteriorated and it was agreed that the annual subscription should be increased to £13.13.0.

1955. The A.G.M. was held on the 11th March, 1955. The Club was still short of funds, various suggestions were discussed for increasing revenue, such as the issue of day tickets at weekends, a levy of £1 per member during 1955 and an increase in membership from 55 to 60, a further increase in the annual subscription. Eventually the annual subscription was raised to £15.15.0.

1956. The A.G.M. was held on the 1st March, 1956. It was reported that the river fished well in the early part of the season but that the dry Summer had made fishing difficult later. It was the general opinion that the river is now well stocked with trout and the hope was expressed that members would endeavour to reduce the grayling population during-the winter months.

1957. The A.G.M. was held on the 7th March, 1957. There is no business of importance to record.

1958. The A.G.M. was held on the 21st March, 1958. Satisfaction was expressed on the state of the Club's finances and it was noted that Willie Moore, the watcher, wished to retire after 22 years service.

Author's Note: (The laconic Minutes make no reference to the loss of fish in Hebden Beck in 1956. A Company on the moors was crushing and washing the old lead mine spoil heaps to recover barium sulphate and calcium fluoride; a settling tank burst and the silt killed at least 5000 adult trout, some 9" long, plus the fry and all the larvae on which fish feed.

The Beck, our major breeding stream, would be useless for 5 to 7 years. The Yorkshire Ouse River Board prosecuted the Company under the Salmon & Freshwater Fisheries Act, 1923, and the Company was fined £50 plus £10.10s. cost which was the maximum fine under the Act. This proved no deterrent to the Company who continued operations. The Club had no redress as the fishing rights in the Beck were not theirs and the Club had no proof that fish had been killed in the main river).

1959. The A.G.M. was held on the 25th February, 1959; nothing of note to report.

1960. The A.G.M. was held on the 18th March, 1960. There was a discussion on the cost of the Farmers' Dinner as to whether the expense to the Club was worthwhile, it being pointed out that only a hard core of members participated. In the end it was agreed that the cost of the Farmers' Dinner (£42.10.8.) was a good investment.

A Special General Meeting was held on the 18th November, 1960, the object being certain minor alterations of the Club Rules, which were duly adopted.

1961. The A.G.M. was held on 13th January, 1961. At an earlier Meeting it had been suggested that the reserve fund was insufficient, but a motion to increase the reserve by increasing the entrance fee had not been put forward. After some discussion it was decided to increase the annual subscription to £18.18.0. and the question of increased membership to be discussed at the next A.G.M.

The Club had brought forward the closing date for its accounting year to the 30th September so that members attending the A.G.M. could see a set of accounts.

An A.G.M. was held on the 24th November, 1961, the only business being that it was decided that in future all entrance fees should be credited to a reserve fund.

The Farmers' Dinner was fixed for Friday, 19th January, 1962.

1962. The A.G.M. for 1962 was held on the 30th November.

The Club was getting short of funds again and it was decided to increase the annual subscription to 20 guineas and the entrance fee to 15 guineas.

Concern was expressed about the pollution of certain reaches of the river and after considerable discussion, with strong objections, a resolution was carried to the effect that a condition of membership should be that all members should be members of the Anglers' Co-operative Association.

1963. The A.G.M. was held on the 28th November, 1963.

Author's Note: (No reference in the Minutes is made to further pollution by The Dales Chemicals Ltd., which was first noticed in the Spring of 1963.

Brow Well, a spring which enters the Wharfe between Grassington Mill and the stepping stones became permanently coloured. The matter was taken up by the Rivers Board who made dye tests to prove the source of the discolouration. It was discovered that the Company were importing about 100 tons of material a day for crushing from Greenhow, the spoil being spread on to a soak hole in expectation that the ground would act as a satisfactory filter.

The Club joined forces with the Bradford Waltonians and the Grassington Club to get the A.C.A. to take up this pollution matter with The Dales Chemical Company. The upshot of a lot of legal activity was that the Company went into liquidation. The Clubs obtained £250 damages without any undertaking regarding future operations. The Clubs' joint expenses were £203, so again the Burnsall Club was thwarted in its efforts to get an effective deterrent to polluting the river).

Concern was expressed due to the weak financial condition of the Club but the question of increasing the subscription was left over for voting so that a scheme to be prepared by Mr.J.Baker could be considered.

Author's Note: (I was worried regarding the Club's future. It had been the policy since the Club was formed to fix the subscription to meet outgoings without thought of providing reserves to meet contingencies. The Club had just experienced how hamstrung it would have been if the A.C.A. had not been available to help in the pollution case. The Club had lost the chance of purchasing some fishing rights (Pattison's) due to lack of available funds. It was known that the riparian owners were wanting increased rents when the present tenancy agreements expired: finally the river was fishing badly and not providing good sport for the members).

1964. The A.G.M. was held on the 4th of December. (In February 1964 I had circulated a proposal for forming the Club into a limited liability company. This scheme was put up to members at the A.G.M. there was considerable opposition to it but eventually the Committee were authorised to prepare a scheme which would be considered at a Special General Meeting).

1965. Committee Meetings were held on April 14th, May 21st, October 20th and December 8th, the Annual General Meeting being held on the same date.

A Special General Meeting was held on the 30th September,1965, to consider the formation of a limited liability company and increasing the members from 55 to 65.

A circular had been sent to members dated 25th August, 1965, explaining that after looking into the matter there were difficulties in making the Club into a limited company; it was proposed therefore to continue the Club in its present form and form an independent limited liability company to be called The Burnsall Angling Club Proprietors Ltd. This Company would have an authorised capital of £4000 divided into 40 ordinary shares of £100 each, the issue of shares to be restricted to members of the fishing Club.

The purpose of the Company would be the raising of finance to purchase fishing rights and the ownership of the fishing rights. There was a ready response to this scheme which was passed at the Meeting, also the increase of membership by 10.

At the A.G.M. on the 8th December, 1965, no matters of importance are recorded.

The Committee ruled that in future all proposals for membership must be made on a prescribed entry form which would show the name of the applicant, the names of the proposer and seconder, that only applications for membership on this form would be considered.

A disturbance due to canoeists using the river during the fishing season was brought to the notice of members for the first time.

1966. Committee Meetings were held on the 14th January, 2nd April, 20th October and 17th November, the A.G.M. being held on the 8th December.

During the year canoeing received considerable attention from the Committee, the Committee's policy being to give registered canoe clubs limited facilities for canoeing(mostly outside the fishing season)provided the canoe clubs co-operated and used their influence to stop canoeists using the river at other times, also to help in-stopping lone canoeists who were not members of a canoe club. The Committee decided to approach the riparian owners with a view to them handing over to the Club the rights to restrict canoeing (ultimately this object was achieved as far as two lengths were concerned, namely Dawson's and the Duke of Devonshire's).

The President of the Craven Branch of the Royal Society of St. George (Wing-Commander Knowles Fitton) invited members of the Club to attend a special St.George's Day Service on Sunday, 5th June, 1966, at St.George's Knoll, Appletreewick. One member of the Club attended this Service, it was disappointing that members did not support this invitation by a riparian owner who had considerable local influence.

The fish ponds came up for consideration: formerly the view was held that the spring water which fed the ponds was too cold for economic fish rearing beyond the fry stage, the present knowledgeable members of the Committee did not hold this view, they were of the opinion that the fish ponds could be used to rear sizeable fish which would greatly improve the fishing conditions in the river. The fish ponds had reached a stage where major repairs were needed; the Club were able to obtain the timber needed free of charge from one of the members so that it was only necessary to purchase netting. A new fence was put round the pond area, the ponds cleaned and netted over, thus bringing four ponds back into service. It was reported in a Newsletter dated May, 1966, "the working party, ably led by

Messrs. Craven and Hodgson(Norman), that the work was carried out in weather which was too cold to hold a hammer".

May 1st was the climax of a successful experiment when some 200 fish over 9", which had been reared in the ponds, were put into the river.

The accounts for 1966 show that the Club's finances were improving, there being a cash balance of £699.

1967. Committee Meetings were held on the 31st May, 21st November and 7th December, 1967, which was followed by the A.G.M. on the same date.

There was an epidemic of foot and mouth disease in the area and the Committee felt that the river should be closed for grayling fishing until the all clear had been given to the farmers - this was acted upon.

It was agreed that in future the revenue from entrance fees should not be used for current expenditure and should be put in a separate account to form a reserve fund. In spite of the satisfactory balance it was considered advisable to increase the subscription to 20 gns. which would be needed to meet higher outgoings. The river had been stocked in the Spring with 1000 sizeable fish from the ponds, 500 sizeable fish had been sold to the Grassington Club which reduced the nett expenditure on the fish ponds.

Members had been asked to make a return of fish caught during the season, only 15 members sent in their return.

A request had been put in for a second Dinner for members in addition to the Farmers' Dinner, members had been circulated, only 18 had replied, of these 5 were against the second dinner so the scheme was dropped.

The question of members' sons being able to join the Club as junior members was discussed at some length, it was decided that the present method of issuing tickets to members i.e. 4 tickets free and 6 further tickets at 2/6d. per ticket gave fathers sufficient opportunity to allow their sons to fish.

1968. Committee Meetings were held on 23rd January, 26th March, 20th June, 18th July, 16th October and 21st November, followed by the A.G.M. on the same date.

The river was re-opened for fishing after closure for foot and mouth disease on the 25th January, 1968.

Thirty fish returns had been received from members.

The Club was being lobbied for membership of The Salmon & Trout Association, the Committee decided that this should not be obligatory but agreed to circulate members recommending that they should join.

The Club's right to control canoeists was discussed at length, it was decided to take Counsel's opinion. Later The Salmon & Trout Association issued a statement on the legal position. The upshot being that only the riparian owner had the right to stop canoeists and even then the position was difficult unless the riparian owner owned both banks: the only way the Club could obtain the right to control canoeists was to get the riparian owner to transfer his canoeing rights into the Club's lease for fishing.

Certain members of the Committee wanted to stop all canoeing, the alternative view being that there was more chance of controlling canoeing if recognised Clubs had limited permission, it was decided to adhere to this policy.

It was reported that owing to receiving £544 for the sale of fish that the revenue from the fish ponds had exceeded the expenses by £100, 1800 sizeable fish having been turned into the river. It was evident that the stocking with sizeable fish had improved the catches though members caught the limit of 5 brace per day too easily within the first few weeks of the fish being placed in the river.

Fish disease (UDN) had occurred in the Aire and the Yore, the Committee were anxious to prevent it spreading into the Wharfe. It was decided in May to stop the sale of day tickets to non-members; members were advised of the need to disinfect their lines, waders and tackle if they had been fishing other waters before fishing the Club water and canoeists were instructed that they had got to disinfect their canoes; later it was decided to stop canoeing completely. However, in time it became apparent that these precautions would not be effective as other Clubs on the river were not taking similar measures.

Later the sale of day tickets for the grayling season was reintroduced as the Club was losing considerable revenue.

The Committee were concerned with fishermen who were leaving lengths of nylon on the bank which was a danger to entanglement of birds; the members were circulated in a Newsletter warning them not to leave nylon about and if any nylon is scrapped to see that it is cut into short pieces, no longer than 1", but better still to take it home and burn it.

The Club's Vice-President, Alderman Tom Cliffe, became Mayor of Huddersfield. This was Huddersfield's Centenary Year and the town was visited by H.M. The Queen. The Club felt honoured that one of its members should hold this office in a memorable year.

1969. Committee Meetings were held on February 6th, May 22nd, July 10th, September 11th and November 20th, followed by the A.G.M. on the same date.

For the first time it was brought to the notice of the Committee that a scheme was afoot for the Bradford Corporation to extract water from Dibb Beck (developments of this Scheme occur in later Minutes).

The Club was experiencing considerable difficulty with the Secretary of the Leeds Canoe Club, who, having been granted limited permission to canoe was wanting to extend this; moreover his reports of the position after meeting our Club Secretary were completely distorted to the disadvantage of the Fishing Club. It was decided in future that any meetings with the Leeds Canoe Club should be attended by at least two members of our Committee. The position regarding canoeing was explained to members in an appendix to the end of season Newsletter dated September 1969.

There was a dry spell during June and July with a result that there was a shortage of water in the spring feeding the fish ponds, though the Club had acquired a pump for re-circulating the water a number of fish had died.

It was thought that a contributory factor was feeding the fish in the daytime rather than in the evening; one pond had had to be emptied due to leakage, in consequence 300 undersized fish had found their way into the river. Owing to the light fishing the previous season it was not considered that this loss of fish would be serious.

The Duke of Devonshire had accepted an invitation to be Chief Guest at the Farmers' Dinner but later had to decline owing to the fact that he would be abroad on the date of the Dinner.

Satisfaction was expressed at the A.G.M. that the Wharfe had escaped the fish disease which had affected other rivers in Yorkshire.

There were 41 fish returns from members, fish caught during the trout season totalled 1395, which was an increase of 500 over the 1966 season. It was reported that 1000 rainbow trout had been obtained as a trial, these fish were being fed in the ponds and would be 11" in less than a year.

A former member, John Kilburn, had died, the Author paid tribute to him in a Newsletter as follows:-

(Members will be sorry to hear of the death of John Kilburn, who for a number of years was a member of the Club. John's father, who was President of the Club at the time when I became a member, had very strong views on how fish should be caught, he believed that the only method was an artificial fly; in spite of the fact that he brought this view to bear on his son, John forsook the fly completely and became the best upstream low water worm fisherman that it has ever been my privilege to know. It was an education to watch him fishing in low water conditions, at times he stalked his fish by crawling up the stream into position; he knew all the likely holding places and having got into position with his worm trailing in the water on a length of line behind him, his rod parallel with the water, in fact no part of the fisherman or his tackle projected more than 2'6" above the water; with a flick of the wrist he would place the worm with deadly accuracy exactly where he wanted it, there would be a few moments pause and then a tightening on the line and he was into a good fish. He would take fish from stickles and thin water which from casual observation one would have thought far too shallow to carry any fish at all.

If he adopted a stretch of water, as he sometimes did by staying for a weeks fishing, I found it paid to transfer one's activities to another stretch as John's dexterity in catching fish certainly reduced the number of fish available for other fishermen. However, one always admires skill even though it is sometimes employed contrary to one's personal interests).

1970. Committee Meetings were held on 11th December, 1969, 12th February 1970, 16th July, 3rd September and 1st October 1970, the A.G.M. being held on the 19th November, 1970.

The President summarised the year's activities and reported that the river was full of fish but far too few had been caught due to the low water conditions which operated through most of the trout fishing season. It was considered that the fishing of the Club water was as good as it had ever been.

Canoe clubs were pressing for further use of the river, in addition there was disturbance due to unauthorised canoeing. The Secretary and a member of the Committee attended a stormy

meeting where canoe clubs, River Authorities and fishing interests were represented. The canoe clubs tried to bulldoze through that they had a right to use the rivers but were eventually put in their place. The Committee expressed the opinion that the present method of giving limited permission to canoe is the correct policy.

The impending work on Grimwith Reservoir was developing, the Committee had briefed a firm of solicitors to look after the Club's interests, the Anglers' Co-operative Association and The Salmon & Trout Association were also keeping a watching brief. It was minuted that in the event of the reservoir works interfering with fishing it would be necessary for the Club to establish the extent of the interference and in this connection the provision of fish returns by members was essential. A number of leases were renewed during the year, the Duke's lease was due for renewal the following year, all of which involved extra cost.

Tom Moore had decided to retire, members contributed towards a retiring present and as a result £53.2.6. was presented to Moore in cash. A tribute was paid to the work which Tom Moore did for the Club and appreciation of the work done by the Moore family who have looked after the Club's interests for nearly eighty years.

It was reported that the rainbow trout in the ponds grew at approximately twice the rate of brown trout, a number were turned into the river in August which provided good sport for members: there was some conjecture as to whether they would still be in the river the following Spring. It was noted that the river was much more heavily fished than in former times and to provide sport stocking with sizeable fish was considered an essential.

The President had the honour of representing the Club at a Party which the Duke of Devonshire gave in August to mark the retirement of Mr.Hey from the Estate Office.

There was considerable discussion at the A.G.M. regarding the financial position shown in the President's statement. Although the Club was in funds looking towards future expenditure it was evident that the present income would be hopelessly inadequate. The A.G.M. (very wisely it transpired) decided to deal with the matter promptly, the subscription was increased to £35 and the membership from 65 to 70, though it was not intended to fill up to the full 70 immediately.

1971. Committee Meetings were held on the 8th April, 2nd September, 10th November, the A.G.M. being on the 25th November.

Albert Hawkins replaced Tom Moore as watcher. The rearing of sizeable fish required the watcher to spend much more of his time at the fish ponds: Hawkins had the unfortunate experience of having his driving licence suspended so that he was dependent on his wife driving him to the road gate nearest the fish ponds. He suggested to the Committee that if they provided him with a pony it would be a considerable economy, not only would it convey him right down to the ponds but in addition he would be able to do some of his bank patrolling more conveniently on a horse. Finally it was estimated that the pony would feed on roadside verges and require very little corn; altogether an attractive proposition. The pony was duly acquired with harness and saddle bags to convey food to the fish ponds, only to discover that Hawkins could not ride!

It was reported that the rainbow yearlings in the fish ponds were not doing too well, though the 2000 rainbow fry were in excellent condition.

The reward to the watcher for apprehending poachers had been put up from £1. to £5 for each conviction, Hawkins was active in catching poachers: whether this was due to the increased reward or that he was more industrious in this respect than his predecessor is difficult to say but during the year the Club was faced with paying out £40 rewards to Hawkins.

There was a divergence of opinion regarding the sale of grayling tickets to visitors, the view was expressed that there was nothing to stop a bus load of 30 descending on the Club's waters. Some members of the Committee wanted to stop grayling fishing for visitors altogether but it was pointed out that the Club received a considerable income from the sale of grayling tickets and if this was stopped some other means of securing the income would have to be found. In the end nothing was done to limit the number of grayling tickets but the limit of fish that could be taken on a visitor's ticket was fixed at six and the method of fishing was limited to fly and swimming the worm.

Time was taken by the Committee in discussing the effect of the proposed water abstraction and enlargement of Grimwith Reservoir: at this stage the actual details of the scheme were not known, only that a Bill had been passed through Parliament to allow Grimwith Reservoir to be extended; viewed in retrospect these discussions were of little help, other than it alerted the Committee, and in turn the members of the Club, to the fact that at some future date they would have to take action to safeguard their interests. The Secretary reported that he was already in touch with the Member of Parliament regarding the situation and would attend, with the President, a Meeting with the Bradford Corporation Waterworks Engineer and the Yorkshire Ouse & Hull River Authority Engineers in December.

40 members had made fish returns which gave the trout season's total: -

Brown Trout	680
Rainbow Trout	15
Grayling	56
Total	751

The returns showed that the beats were more heavily fished in April, May and June but less frequently in July, August and September; that much better fish were taken in May than previously and fish over 1 lb. in weight were common. The rainbow trout catch of 15 compared with 114 the previous season, the total catch of 751 compared with 1347 in 1970 and 1402 in 1969.

Author's Note:-

Proposed Schemes for further water abstraction from the Wharfe.

(The Committee Minute Book and the A.G.M. Minute Book in 1971 and 1972 contain detailed reference to the proposed water abstraction scheme. It was difficult to find out precisely what was intended. The Department of the Environment issued a publication in February, 1972, headed "Bradford (Grimwith) Water Supply", but the complete position is not made clear in this document, in fact the details of the scheme were still being developed at this stage.

It was not until the Secretary and the Author attended the Public Enquiry held at Bradford Town Hall on the 24th of January to the 2nd February, 1973, that the full measure of the scheme, as far as it affected the Club's interests, could be appreciated. At the time I summarised the position in an Aide Memoire, extracts being given in Appendix 2. Members were also advised of the position in a Newsletter.

So far the Inspector has not made his findings known).

1972. Committee Meetings were held on the 2nd March, 13th April, 5th October, the A.G.M. being held on the 23rd November.

In previous years it had been customary to close the river for a week after the hand reared trout had been put in. Objection was raised to this on the ground that it advertised the date on which the fish were being put into the river; it was proposed that the fish should be put in at various times spread over the season. This was ruled out as not practicable, partly because the ponds have to be emptied to receive the next batch of fish and partly due to the difficulty in finding the labour to do the work. There is a small core of members who are very enthuastic workers at the fish ponds but they are not sufficient to carry out re-stocking except at one go. It was decided that the river should be closed for six days immediately after the fish had been put in.

There was another calamity at the fish ponds, nearly all the yearlings having been lost from an unknown disease. The Yorkshire River Authority and a veterinary surgeon could not find any reason why the fish should have died.

Hawkins had asked to be relieved of his job as water bailiff and had been replaced by Joe Smith.

Some members of the Committee were of the opinion that the river could be improved by the introduction of a quantity of chalk; the views of a consultant geologist were obtained, his opinion was that the limited amount of chalk or limestone which it would be possible to place in the river would make no measurable difference to the ph. value of the water.

Plans were discussed for the annual dinner in the Centenary Year, 1973. The Duke of Devonshire had consented to attend this dinner and become President of the Club for the Centenary Year. To fit in with the Duke's arrangements the dinner was fixed for the 25th May, 1973, at the Craiglands Hydro, Ilkley.

The fines imposed by Skipton magistrates on persons caught poaching were proving inadequate as a deterrent: the Committee discussed whether there were ways and means of getting these fines increased.

It was noted that 228 member/fishing days were shown from the returns compared with 339 in 1971.

The Club had received a complaint regarding a member's dog worrying sheep and it was arranged to reintroduce the Bye-Law prohibiting members from taking dogs on the water.

Hebden Beck had been polluted again due to a farmer tipping disinfectant into the Beck. In addition an owner of cattle trucks had been emptying his tank, eventually some of the disinfectant had seeped into the river via a drain, about 6 lbs. of dead fish were taken from the river, the majority being about

3" to 4" long. The River Board took this matter up with the farmer; the Committee were of the opinion that the Board had acted in a dilatory manner.

1973. Committee Meetings were held on 11th January, 22nd February, 31st May.

It was reported that the river watcher had seen a salmon of estimated weight 7 to 8 lbs. in the river in the pool above Hebden Suspension Bridge, another had been seen in the pool above Barden Bridge.

Author's Note: (Salmon can now pass the pollution barrier in the Humber again and they have been re-established to a limited extent in the Yore. The Chatsworth Estate Office brought some salmon ova from the Duke's Estate in Ireland, hatched them out and turned the fry into the Wharfe some 3 or 4 years ago, a few salmon par had been caught; there was a scheme at one time to net out the smolts and transport them over the pollution barrier in the Humber; it is doubtful if this scheme was ever put into effect and it does look as if some smolts have managed to get into the sea.

The Club's view is that salmon are not wanted in the river again and it would spoil the trout and grayling fishing).

It was reported that many improvements had been made at the fish ponds.

Water abstraction.

A Meeting had been held in Leeds where various angling clubs were represented, notably the Leeds and Bradford amalgamated clubs, and arrangements were made for financing the objection to the Appeal. Leeds put up the major amount by levying 20p per member, the smaller clubs put up fixed amounts, in our case £100. It was intended to engage Counsel to represent the angling clubs' objections but later when it was discovered that the Enquiry might last 10 days it was realised that to brief Counsel would be beyond the available funds, and in the event the clubs were represented by Mr.Cunliffe-Lister of Ripon.

The Secretary and the Author prepared evidence for submitting to the Public Enquiry which was to take place on the 24th January,1973.

The effect on the Club's finances of Value Added Tax was considered, as the Club's turnover was less than £5000 p.a. it was not necessary to register, but certain expenses would be increased in consequence of VAT.

Details of the Centenary Dinner were fixed.

The Committee asked for a new map of the Club's water to be prepared and this was put in hand. It was estimated that about 200 might attend the Dinner but in the event only 114 attended; this was partly due to the dinner being held on the Friday of the Spring Bank Holiday when a number of people were away.

A Mr.Donald Downs had been briefed to provide a suitable illustration for the menu.

The Centenary Dinner proved to be a most enjoyable occasion, Grace was said by the Rector of Burnsall, the Rev.H.D.Pike; the President, His Grace the Duke of Devonshire, proposed the Toasts of The Queen and the Health of the Guests, this was responded to by His Honour Judge McKee and the Author presented a brief outline of the history of the Club, extracts of which are given in Appendix 3.

(It is not in the nature of a Dalesman to admit that he is enjoying himself, after the Dinner the following amusing dialogue took place between the Author and a farmer who was obviously having a good time:

Author: "Did you enjoy the Dinner?"

Farmer: "Well, it wasn't bad".

Author: "I thought it was a very good dinner, nicely served".

Farmer: "Well, it was all right but it could have been a deal better! "

It is fitting that this History should terminate with the Centenary Dinner, though the Club goes on: one trusts that it will continue to thrive and give pleasure to members and visitors over many years to come).

CHAPTER VIII

"Incidents "(Mainly Personal).

1. The Lure of Fishing.
2. Bad Fishing.
3. An awkward stalk.
4. The Smutting Fish.
5. Under Doctor's Orders.
6. The undeterred female.
7. Which Bedroom?
8. Sparse risers.
9. Caught without being hooked.
10. You never can tell.
11. Unsuitable conditions for flyfishing.
12. A day that still lives.
13. Complete immersion.
14. The evening rise.
15. The Red Lion.
16. The Fish in the Glass Case.
17. Woodhouse Manor Farm.
18. An experiment in hydro-electricity.
19. Hartlington Mill
20. Engineers go fishing.
21. Fishermens' Service.

1. The Lure of Fishing.

Lying dormant in all human beings is the primitive instinct of fishing and hunting which in normal times expresses itself in field sports of various kinds, if we fished for the pot only we should use the methods most likely to bring results; as it is not necessary to fish for trout for food we create artificial means of making fishing more difficult in order to pander to our subconcious hunting instinct. The fact that fish are hidden and there is a sense of the unknown adds a further zest to fishing. A well fed dog will not hunt keenly, when fish are too easily caught we lose interest in fishing. Keen fishermen must have the hunting sense nearer the surface than others, they do not mind the size of the fish available provided skill is needed to catch them. Whilst the lure of the big trout in an Irish lough in Mayfly time will give a weeks pleasure one soon yearns to fish again where the fish, though smaller, need stalking.

My first trout fishing proper was in the Wharfe at Bolton Abbey during the 1914 War; father sent my brother and me away for a holiday with the Rev. C.M.Sharpe, the idea being to cure our souls and teach us fishing. The parson was the ideal type, a classical scholar, and in his youth a Cambridge Blue and County cricketer; he was so keen on fishing that we were left to fend for ourselves. I think I fished for a fortnight and only caught one sizeable fish, this was August, the worst fishing month and could be excusable, but the parson was getting his 12 and 16 fish per day, he would have caught more if he could have bothered to look after his tackle which was the most dilapidated ever; his knots were always pulling out(he fished hair) his reel jammed, the rod broke and he lost fish through holes in his net; he dressed like a tramp and although over 60 years old rose with the dawn and fished until dusk. Except Sunday, when out came the parson's clothes and we boys were put under control. Sunday seemed a long and heavy day.

On Sundays Sharpe helped out the local parson by reading the Lessons in the Priory Church, he had a mellow bass voice and his manner of reading the Lessons was erudite and delightful, even from the point of view of a boy listening to him. I am including these notes about the Rev. C.M.Sharpe for the reason that there are a few local inhabitants still living who remember him as a man of outstanding personality.

In August, 1915, H.M.King George V came to shoot grouse on the Bolton Abbey moors, to prevent putting people about in wartime he stayed in the royal train at Bolton Abbey station. One morning Sharpe caught a dish of fish before breakfast, walked up to the station, put his visiting card with the fish and requested that they should be offered to the King for breakfast; Sharpe got a personal handwritten letter of thanks from H.M. and this was his most treasured possession. Where is the fisherman today who in August can catch a dish of fish in time to be delivered (45 minutes walk) and cooked before breakfast?

Since these early days I have fished many rivers and lakes but still prefer the Wharfe as my first love.

Though of an impatient nature I never find fishing a trial of patience, one has got to work to catch trout in the Wharfe and there is not time to be impatient. Fishing may develop a selfish nature, it also teaches one to keep one's temper, once you lose your temper the score is always in the fish's favour.

When conditions are bad if you do not give all your attention to fishing you catch nothing; when conditions, on rare occasions, are good you know that these conditions will not last long and you must make the best of it, so that either way it is an all absorbing interest.

Finally you can never be quite sure that conditions will turn out as expected, perhaps it is this unpredictableness which creates the real lure of fishing.

2. Bad Fishing.

I do not particularly care for early season fishing, preferring to wait until the fish have regained full condition and are feeding in the runs. In seasons when there is a warm Spring far too many fish are taken out early on with the result that Summer fishing suffers: for this reason I am not very well up in early season technique. On a day about the middle of April, it was cold and blustery, the river was in flood, in my estimation a most unlikely day. I put up a cast with larger flies than usual and started to fish downstream from Burnsall Bridge, by 11 a.m. I was opposite Appletreewick water (not Club water at that time) without having had a rise and bearing in mind conditions this was not surprising. Harry Woods was fishing the other bank and on enquiry he said he had got six fish. I was somewhat taken aback by this answer, rather doubting the truth of it. By 2 p.m. I had caught two fish decided to call it a day and return home. Meeting Harry (incidentally the only other angler out that day) he said that he thought that the fish had about finished for the day and volunteered that he had caught over twenty, this was unbelievable and I told him so; as the river was too deep to cross he turned his fish out on the bank for me to see and counted twenty seven! Of course he was one of those experts, of which there are a few whose fishing technique is as far ahead of the ordinary fisherman as that of the crack game shot is above the good average shot; the incident brings out how badly one can fish at times. I went out thinking it was a bad day, unintelligently flogged the river instead of fishing it and was shown up in the manner I deserved.

3. An Awkward Stalk.

If it is results which count then fishing on one's own will pay the best dividend, yet half the charm of a days fishing is to have a friend with you even if the results suffer. It is nice to take a guest for a day who does not normally get a chance to fish preserved water, let him fish the best pools and fit yourself in where you can; not only do you get pleasure from seeing the friend get fish but you fish water which is usually left out in the normal day, sometimes with unexpected results.

Sometimes company is thrust on one at awkward moments: I had located a good fish in a backwater by the cow byre below Burnsall Bridge, like all good fish he was in a difficult position, in fact there was only one place where it was possible to cast a fly and it was a case of waiting until the water was at such a height that the swirl of the backwater in which he fed was at this spot. As I approached the bend one evening the water was just right and the fish was rising, I knew it was a case of now or never. To get into casting position without being seen meant a crawl of several yards and I had just got placed when I saw three young soldiers walking along the bank; if they walked past me they would put the fish down and there was always the danger that they would come and stand by me; something had to be done

quickly. I called to them and said "do you want to see me catch a fish? All right, you have been taught how to take cover, get down and crawl up alongside me, but whatever happens move quietly and don't let anything but your heads show over the edge of the bank". They must have been well trained youths because they carried out my instructions perfectly and in a few minutes all four of us were lined up lying on our tummies. I started casting and the third or fourth cast got the fish, he was just over a pound, I was a little disappointed with his size but very pleased with the double stalk I had brought off. Later when celebrating the catch in the Red Lion one of the youths said "I had no idea that fishing was so easy: " It was certainly one of the times when things went right - but easy? I had had that fish under observation off and on all Summer and had spent hours finding out how to make the approach and practising casting over the spot when he was not rising, I had the drill well rehearsed ready for action.

4. The Smutting Fish.

It was the slack part of a Summer afternoon, I was sitting on the bank by the big pool below Woodhouse, the water was low and dead clear; looking down the almost still pool I saw a dimple in the surface near the stones. I thought at first it was a fly hatching, then I saw it again and realised that it was a fish sucking midges off the surface.

Whilst I had no idea of the size of the fish it was a good place fora big fish and he was worth trying for. In my fly box I have some 0000 midges, tiny flies for artificials but large compared with the natural insect. Tying on one of these to a 6X point (apart from the need to fish fine 6X is needed with such small flies to make them land on the water lightly) I tried a cast or two on the water opposite to where I was sitting to make sure everything was all right, then noting the stone near the rise made a detour inland to get below the fish; just as I was getting into position two Grammar School boys came along the opposite bank (this was during the period when part of Leeds Grammar School was evacuated to Hartlington Hall), I knew if they passed the fish they would put him down so I asked them to wait a few minutes until I had tried the fish. Under the conditions I have described the best chance is the first cast, on the Wharfe in low water I never believe in putting a fly dead over a rise, the fish are positioned further below the surface than in a chalk stream where food is more plentiful and so their cone of vision is larger. In theory at any rate if the fly lands just to one side and above the cone the fish sees an indistinct image until the fly comes into view on the edge of the cone. In this case the fly landed on the right spot first time, was taken and the fish hooked by a well timed strike. On 6X gut one has got to be very careful but it is a large pool with plenty of room to fight a fish. He turned out to be a beautifully shaped fish just over l lbs. another case of things going right and spectators doing as they are told.

5. Under Doctor's Orders.

I was ordered by my doctor to take an extra half day off per week, and to make sure that I would act on his advice he insisted on coming fishing with me one Wednesday. The doctor was not a fisherman and did not comprehend the importance of getting to the river bank at the earliest possible moment so, on this particular day, it would be 5 p.m. before I cast a fly.

It was an ideal fishing day in May, warm and the river just tinged with colour; I soon had four fish, all well above the average and looked forward to a record evenings fishing, but I reckoned without my M.O. and the weather; it started to rain, I was ordered in (I rather suspect it was to prevent the doctor from getting wet than to protect my health), the only consolation was to be treated to some excellent food and wine at the Red Lion.

The fish were still rising when we had finished dinner but it was still raining and I was not allowed to go out again. The doctor had a lot of fishing acquaintances and took every opportunity of relating my, in his estimation, fishing skill to them, and for a time I possessed a reputation out of all proportion to my ability. I tried explaining that conditions were in my favour, but this was only looked upon as modesty.

6. The Undeterred Female.

I was fishing the second pool below the suspension bridge at Hebden, at the time of this story I had not had much experience of this part of the river and did not know that there was an adjacent holiday rest house. Whilst I was fishing a female in a bathing wrap came down to the same pool. Taking off the wrap she exposed a very adequate bathing costume and proceeded, as I thought, to bathe in the very place where I was fishing, but no: she had come down to the river to get washed, out came soap and flannel and she lathered the exposed positions of her anatomy (the lady was no nymph, she had reached the spinner stage). Not a word was spoken, we just glared at each other until, ablutions completed, she departed. I can see now that the lady was just as annoyed with me as I was with her, whilst she prevented me from fishing I had prevented her from washing the parts underneath the bathing costume: She was evidently one of those British women of character who insist on a daily bath whether they live in the bush, the desert or a caravan.

7. Which Bedroom?

I arrived one Summer evening at Burnsall about 8 o'clock. It was one of those evenings when the fish start rising about seven, go on rising all through the night and into the dawn. Then during the day they sleep and the daytime angler cannot understand why the fish do not feed. The Lion had omitted to reserve the room which I had booked so I was boarded out in a cottage in the village belonging to Mrs.Bell. I had been there before, it was a very small affair, one room and a scullery downstairs. Mrs.Bell moved out into a shed in the garden when visitors occupied her rooms. On arriving at the cottage Mrs.Bell offered to show me to my room but I was so eager to get fishing that I dumped my bag and went out. Mrs.Bell promised to leave a lamp burning on the dresser so that I could see to get to bed. The evening rise must have been a good one because I did not get back until after 1 a.m. and found that the lamp had burnt itself out. I had no matches and groped my way upstairs, just as I reached the landing I realised that I did not know which was my room and memory reminded me that the school maam occupied one of the two bedrooms - but which one? There were two doors, one on my right and one on my left - which should I choose? I was in a dilemma and had no clue whatever as to which room was empty, in the end I decided that it was a case of trial and error, I tried the right hand door, .pushed it open, there was no sound of breathing so I felt the bed, found it empty. I wonder what would have happened if I had tried the left hand door first:

8. Sparse Risers.

One week towards the end of May I had two guests fishing with me, so that we did not overcrowd the river we decided to confine our activities to the stretch of water between the cow byre below Burnsall Bridge and the Dibb end. The water was low, the weather cold and windy, bad for fishing. On the Saturday I got four fish out of a wind swept flat, on Sunday my friends got five fish between them, I got nothing. There were only odd fish rising, in fact on Sunday afternoon by comparing notes we agreed that there were only six uncaught fish moving on the stretch; each fish had been covered by each of us several times with different flies, the results being a rise or a pluck but we could not hook these fish. My friends had to go on the Monday but I decided to stay and out of curiosity fish the same stretch, the weather was still against fishing and I tried the located spots again as I came to them, caught three of the fish, rose two others, leaving only one fish unaccounted for; I did not rise another fish anywhere else. Under the prevailing conditions there were very few fish feeding (on fly) but of those few we caught twelve and left-three. The fish were all about the 10" size. Why should there be just the same few fish feeding and why should they be such persistent risers? The three fish I caught on the Monday must have been risen and possibly pricked several times on Saturday and Sunday. Why did three gut shy fish on Saturday and Sunday get themselves caught on Monday?

9. Caught without being Hooked.

One fish caught on the Saturday was most unlucky, I was casting at about 450 in an upstream direction when I rose and turned over a fish. On recovering the line I found the cast in a hopeless tangle, so bad that I decided to jettison the cast and tie on a new one(one of the advantages of the low cost of nylon), I had to tie on new flies and hampered by the wind it was fifteen to twenty minutes before T was fishing again. The line had not been reeled in so it was the same length as before and I cast again to the same spot. It was taken at once and I landed a well fed fish of 10 1/2". When I came to unhook the fish I found that it was not hooked at all! The piece of gristle on its lower jaw was severed from the skin except at the extremities, thus forming a slit, the fish was fast by the knot which joined the top dropper to the cast jamming in the top of this slit. The remainder of the cast i.e. all three flies, was through the slit without a tangle. When the fish rose the first time I thought it was the point fly which was taken. The only explanation I can think of is that after being pricked on the first rise the fish took up a lie somewhat nearer to me(the slit which may have been caused by the triangle from a spinning bait pulling out, possibly taking the form of a loop in the water), on the second cast the fish did not rise but due to some freak of current flow the cast was taken down point fly first alongside the fish and through the loop, the remaining flies following; the top knot jammed when I started to recover the line. The other puzzle was, how did the cast get tangled in the first place, I am fairly certain it was not tangled prior to the fish rising.

10. You never can Tell.

4th June, 1955. It should have been Summer weather but it was as cold as Winter, I had arranged to look at Black Pots Moor with Alfred Catton with the intention of altering a line of butts; when we got on to the high ground it was so wet and rough that it was quite impossible to do anything.

There was a rod in the car so we decided to have a few hours fishing just for something to do. By the time we arrived at the river the weather had, if anything, deteriorated, it was quite difficult tackling up due to cold fingers; I decided to fish the caravan pool as it provided a little shelter from the wind. We passed Willie Moore, the watcher, he clearly thought it was a waste of time fishing but was too polite to say so. However, we had come too far to turn back without trying. Within 10 minutes I had a fish and a second within 15 minutes, then every fish in the pool started to rise and I caught fish after fish, the rise went on from 2 p.m. until 5 p.m. Greenwell's Glory was the best fly; every time it was put over a rising fish it was taken; there were only two snags, casting was extremely difficult, the wind would whip the line straight off the water and the fish rising were all about the 9" mark and it took me a long time to get two more fish of 10" to make up two brace. During this time Alfred, who is not a fisherman, was being frozen but he appreciated that it was the rise of a lifetime and was sportsman enough to stick it out. I lost count of the fish caught but it must have been well over twenty as there was hardly a minute without a rise. It shows that in early Summer bad weather conditions should not be taken as a criterion of how the fish will react. It also refutes the current idea that fish do not rise as freely as they used to. If this rise had taken place in the days when fishermen took everything over 8" I would have returned home with a bag which would have created history.

Tom Bland, who for many years kept the Manor House, when an old man, told me how as a boy he went to 'wait on' an angler on the Kilnsey water when the Iron Blue was on. He carried the creel, the fish rose all day, towards the end of the day the creel was completely full to the lid when his employer said "Is there any more room in that basket, boy?" and in spite of being told "no" he caught six more fish.

This story was told to me to illustrate how good the fishing was in former times, actually it was a unique experience in Tom Bland's lifetime and it will be seen from my foregoing narrative it could happen again today.

11. Unsuitable Conditions for Fly Fishing!

One August morning during a fortnights holiday at Burnsall we woke up to find the river topping its banks with a flood; the natural minnow and worm fishers were jubilant and tried to persuade me to spin until the water became suitable for fly again. I was not interested and watched them off with promises of the big catches they would be bringing home in the evening. I went out about 4 o'clock to see what response I could get from a Devon minnow and caught two fish. On the way back home I noticed that the flood was clearing and in the swirl beyond the island by Daggett's cow byre there were fish rising. It was 6.30, dinner would be at 7 p.m. I felt that I must have some of these fish to break even with the minnow and worm men. I knew that there was too much water in the river to wade to the island, the only place from which the fish could be reached, however I was near home and it would not do any harm going over the top of my waders. In half an hour I had caught seven fish, they were still rising but it was dinner time and I had enough to save my reputation. Back to the hotel, a quick change and in to dinner, I was greeted by the other fishermen with caustic comments on the futility of fly fishing, getting wet and staying out late.

Expecting that they had all got their big baskets I said nothing but during the meal a tale of woe was unfolded; for some strange reason the fish would not take a worm or a natural minnow and the others had not a fish between them. I ate a hasty dinner, nipped out again quietly, found two fish rising within casting distance of the bank and caught them; this made my total bag eleven and not a fish under 10". Back again in the hotel I put the fish on a dish and took them into the bar, I suppose it is bad form to show off but I could not resist rubbing it in to those who were so sure of results in the morning. In its way a very satisfactory day, although once the fish started to rise they were easy and the catching of them needed no particular skill.

12. A Day That Still Lives.

It was one of the few days we have each Summer without a cloud in the sky, I can't remember the date but it would be the end of June or early July; I am not at all sure of the year, but it was in the petroless period, I think 1946. Looking back it was an inconvenience not having a car for pleasure but we were better off than we are today when the whole countryside is infested with cars. I think even at the time I appreciated the beauty of the country more because of the difficulty of getting about; in fact circumventing the difficulties of transport and the journey itself was half the pleasure of a fishing trip. I was staying at the Red Lion, the river was low and I thought that my best chance was the rough water in the runs above the Appletreewick bathing pool; this meant an hours walk in waders, no small task on a hot Summer day, but it paid to get the walking done whilst one was fresh and fish back home. The only snag with this procedure was that it was not possible to start fishing before 10.30 a.m. and on a hot day I like to have at least two fish by this time, however one can't have it all ways. Starting to fish in the run below the bathing pool with a dry fly I was lucky to get a fish within the first few minutes; the fish disgorged several small dark red beetles; on windy days in Summer beetles are blown off the land and the fish go mad about them.

Against such an eventuality there was in my box a Kennedy's floating Coch-y-Bondhu beetle, this was put on but the fish would not have it, in the rough water the fish would rise and shy off: the water was so clear that they could see the fake. (I wonder sometimes if fish scent some of the natural insects). I changed to size 1. Red Quill, with the object of fishing the fast water; as I was passing a still pool I noticed a big fish cruising near the surface, the fly was cast to him and it was taken with a swoosh: He turned out to be a fish in splendid condition, just 11/4lbs. I caught three more fish under similar conditions, one just over and one just under a pound and one about 3/4lb: all the same type of violent rise; I came to the conclusion that all these fish had been feeding on beetles, there was no wind this day to blow the beetles on to the water, the fish were annoyed, hungry and took my fly out of temper.

It was now 2.30 p.m. the sun had been blazing on to my fish tin, but even so I was surprised that the fish had so soon acquired a strong smell; sitting down I found that it was the corned beef sandwiches which were the source of the odour. This meant going without lunch, a serious matter in those days when food was still in short supply. I am a non-smoker but I carried a pipe to keep midges off (this was before the advent of DDT preparations) and I found that by smoking hard hunger was assuaged. I caught one more fish in a run and lost another beauty. Up to this time,

3.30 p.m. I had not seen a fish rise to a natural fly yet all six fish had been caught on a dry fly. I now found a fish rising in a gentle run between two stones, I tried the fly over him many times but he would not look at it, watching the rise to the natural carefully I noticed that I could never see a fly actually taken and wondered if the fish was nymphing, I changed over to wet fly and third or fourth cast I had him. It was a grayling and put up a wonderful fight, the fish was in perfect condition and weighed just a shade more than the 14 lb. trout. For the first time in my life, on the Wharfe, I began to wonder if my fishing box would be big enough to hold the catch. It was now 5 p.m. I had moved very little distance up the river from the starting point, I decided to get some of the mileage towards the hotel walked off. Nothing was seen to rise until I got to Poachers Corner, here there was a fish rising in a run under the far bank by a sapling; it was the typical humped rise showing without doubt that the fish was nymphing. The problem was how to get at the fish without being seen; the only possible cast seemed to be a long line across and slightly upstream; the odds were that the fish would take my fly without breaking surface and with such a long line out I should have no indication of the rise until it was too late. The fish was in fairly fast water and I decided to chance a strike when my cast was a yard below the sapling. The fish took me the very first cast, I had no idea that he had risen until I felt him on striking; another well fed fish approaching the 1 lb. mark. This proved to be the last fish; there was no evening rise; in fact apart from the two fish I have mentioned there was not an apparent rise to the natural fly all day. But what a day for the Wharfe! Eight fish, four above 1 lb. and the smallest 4 lb. These were the only fish I caught, I did not have any small ones to put back. In the bright sunlight low water conditions extreme care was needed in approaching and casting and I think that up to date this is the most satisfactory days fishing which I have had.

In retrospect I am sure that accidentally I hit on exactly the right tactics to catch the fish in the pools. I am not so sure about the runs; it is surprising on a beautiful Summer day that there should be no rise; it is unnatural for the fish to go all day without feeding, I think they were feeding but there was some hatch of nymph going on which held the fishes' attention near the river bed. I had direct evidence of two nymphing fish, would the results have been as good if I had stuck to the runs in the afternoon with a wet fly? I am inclined to think that they might have been even better.

13: Complete Immersion.

It was a fine Summer day just after the war, the water was dead low but fish were moving and could be caught by employing extreme care and caution; to my way of thinking ideal conditions for a days sport. I had a guest with me, we had the river to ourselves, and I was letting him fish the most likely places whilst I took the less likely water. As often happens the unexpected places yielded fish and by 3 p.m. I was quite satisfied, bearing in mind that most of the morning had been occupied in showing my friend round, with the brace of good fish in my box. There was a fish rising in a pool under an ash tree, my cast was worn and frayed and I decided to put on a new 5X cast and fly before trying him. A careless cast and the fly was fast in a tree branch overhanging the water, the usual flicks failed to free the fly and as flies and gut were in short supply it was a case of climbing the tree in preference to breaking the

cast. I managed to free the fly and was making my way down when a branch broke and I got a very complete ducking. If I had been on my own I think I should have gone home but to have done so would have spoilt my guest's day. There was no one about so I stripped, wrung out my clothes and hung them on the offending tree to dry; I had reckoned without the midges which seemed to make a mass attack, so much so that wet clothes, however uncomfortable, were preferable to being eaten alive. Getting dressed in wet garments is a lengthy business and it must have been 5.30 by the time I was ready to fish again. The fish came on to rise quite well and I finished up with four more fish, which could be considered a just reward for persevering under the difficult conditions of a fisherman too wet and a river too dry. My friend too had a good day and I managed to keep the news of my wetting from him until we were on our way home, by which time I was dry. He did not think that I was being strictly truthful when I told him that I had suffered a complete immersion.

14. The Evening Rise.

I find, as a rule, that the fish will not rise in low water to the artificial until the sun has gone behind the hill and no longer shines on the water. Select a pool so that you are looking upstream into the West and can see your fly against the afterglow; by doing this you can see the fly for at least an hour longer; even when night has set in it is sometimes possible to see the fly by bending close to the water and getting the fly in silhouette.

There are several special requirements for evening fishing: DDT anti-midge cream; a flash lamp; a spare dry fly cast; a wet fly cast made up ready for use at dusk if the fish start taking moths and sedges in the runs (sometimes the runs boil with rises when the flats are dead); some warm clothing, cold does not stop an evening rise if following a hot day there is no wind; the sense not to wade in a river bed which you have not learnt to know in daylight; an understanding with your wife, if you have one, that you may be really late home and that there is no need to inform the police if you are not home by 2 a.m.

It was July 15th, 1969, an ideal evening for fishing, the sky was cloudless, the river had been in flood the previous day, it had cleared but still carried an extra volume of water. I started walking down the bank from the "Fell" about 7 p.m. The fish were rising in the flat by Daggett's barn: I made a mental note to have a go at these fish in the dusk; I stopped at the stone pool to tackle up, I fished all the likely runs and corners carefully without even seeing or getting a rise. It seemed that there would be nothing doing until the sun dipped behind the hills about 9.10 p.m. Coincident with the sun going down a slight rise started and I was lucky to get a large grayling on a spinner fished dry, this fish was in splendid fettle. By the time the fly had been changed the fish had stopped rising. It seemed to be an ideal stretch of water and the obvious tactic was to stay still and wait for the rise which was sure to start about 10 p.m. on such a perfect evening. In spite of the ideal weather conditions I was rather disconcerted to notice that there was very little hatch of fly and no swallows on the water: also the midges were not biting. I waited until the light began to go, still nothing doing; usually it is folly to move the beat if one gets on a good pool, but I felt that there was something wrong with my stretch and decided to risk everything and move up to the flat by Daggett's barn.

Here at the flat the fish were rising but they were cruising fish sucking in flies which were coming down half drowned in a swirl and it was too light still for this very smooth bit of water. There was a fish rising just on the far side of the island, I decided to chuck my fly over him, letting the cast rest on the island, no sooner had it landed than the fish put his nose out, looked at the fly, and deliberately left it, I was so close I could see the event and was sure that it was my fly it had come up and looked at, and had not taken a natural fly close to it. I waited, thinking that the fish might turn and have another go, when nothing happened I gave the fly a twitch hoping that it might attract attention, immediately the fish was on and the reel sang: at first I thought I was into a big fish but it fought in the peculiar manner of a foul hooked fish. It proved to be a well fed fish, approaching the 1 lb. mark, hooked right in the middle of the back. No doubt it had been positioned in the water, just under my fly, the jerk must have twitched the fly into its back - an unlucky fish! I got three more fish out of this flat and then it was too dark to change my fly.

Here is an example of an evening which, with the exception of the grayling would have been blank if I had not changed to a spot where fish were rising. I am sure there was no general rise and the only places fish moved were where flies had collected in swirls: in other words there was not sufficient hatch of natural fly on this particular evening to bring the fish on to a general rise, but my word they did rise well in my flat. Why is it that on a perfect evening there is no hatch of fly? On other evenings there had been a relatively good hatch of sedges.

15. The Red Lion.

No account of the Wharfe and Burnsall would be complete without mention of the Red Lion. Before 1939 my knowledge of the Red Lion was limited to it being a convenient place for a drink and a meal: lack of transport during the war made it necessary to make The Lion weekend headquarters for occasional fishing trips. At this time The Lion was kept by the late Lilian Webb, her two sons were in the Forces and the hotel staff was reduced to Lottie, who combined the offices of chambermaid and waitress, Anne the cook, and old George, the boots and washer up, with an additional hand in the bar. In spite of shortage of food and lack of staff every possible kindness was shown to visitors. I had a private agreement with Lottie that during my stay she would not tidy my room so that fishing tackle could be left about in safety, an arrangement which suited us both. Similarly, it was arranged that if I was not in for lunch my food would be kept warm in the oven until I arrived, a most important item at a period when going without a meal was very noticeable; once or twice after I had been fishing the Barden end of the water I got back to The Lion about 6.30 p.m. sat down and had a late lunch which was followed immediately by dinner. Several years my wife, three sons and daughter spent their Summer holidays at The Lion, most enjoyable holidays they were too. How much better the countryside is when there are no motor cars about to spoil it!

16. The Fish in the Glass Case.

In the bar at The Red Lion, mounted on the wall, is a typical specimen fish as found in many country inns which stand by rivers. The case being suitably inscribed as follows:-

"Brown Trout (2 lbs. 15 ozs.)Caught by H.C.Mallinson Esq., on Fly (Coachman) between Burnsall and Linton 26.6.39".

I arrived in the bar one night after an evening rise to find only three people present (the hour was probably after midnight) Henricksen, a member of the Club, another resident, I don't know his name, and the landlord, Derek Webb. Olaf Henricksen was a trawler owner, although in the sixties he was still a man of exceptional physique, it is said of him that at the age of twenty-one his father sent him to sea as a trawler skipper, the crew thought that they would be able to take advantage of the young man and the cook deliberately brought the skipper's cocoa on to the bridge only lukewarm. Henricksen tasted the cocoa and without a word hit the cook a straight right under the jaw, sending him over the rails on to the deck. This incident settled for all time his authority at sea. It was not wise to take an argument too far with him on land either. When Henricksen felt that he wanted a change he either took one of his own trawlers on a fishing trip or came and caught trout in the Wharfe; he had a natural aptitude for fishing in each sphere. Henricksen also had a strong head, on the evening in question he had no doubt had a good deal more than the normal man's limit and was looking for something to argue about.

Glancing round the bar he spied the fish in the case - "That fish never weighed 3 lbs." said Henricksen. The other resident - we will call him Mr.V. who was in a similar frame of mind, suggested that those responsible for mounting the fish would not have marked it up at 2 lbs. 15 ozs. if it had not been an accurate weight. "I don't care what it says" said Henricksen, "that fish is neither long enough nor deep enough to weigh 3 lbs. " "What you are saying is a slander on the person who caught the fish, a person who is a reputable member of the Club" said V. This started the build up of an argument which went about as far as it is possible to go with words; in due course the participators quietened down and retired to bed.

After they had gone Derek told me that he dare not say a word, the fish had been caught when his late father was landlord under the following circumstances: the fish had been spotted by Tom Bland who found it gut shy, so he started a daily feed of maggots with the intention of one day presenting a maggot on a hook. At this time Mallinson was learning to fish, he knew nothing of this fish and it was quite obvious that the white winged Coachman fished sunk was mistaken by the fish for a maggot. Mallinson was living in a cottage in the village at the time and the bush telegraph told Webb senior that Mallinson had caught a big fish, so being interested he went round to see the fish. The landlord, on entering the cottage, was staggered to find that this large fish had just been put into the frying pan; he whipped it out of the pan with the comment "fish of this size are not cooked, they are kept in glass cases. What did it weigh?", only to be told that there were no scales in the house and it had not been weighed. Scales were procured and the fish weighed, but of course it had been gutted. A conference ensued on what to allow for the weight of the entrails, the conclusion reached being that the fish must have been at least 3 lbs. but to put that weight on the case would infer rough and ready weighing and 2 lbs. 15 ozs. would look better.

I have narrated this story as I heard it, I think it is a true story, but true or not true there is the evidence of a very good fish in the case, in fact an exceptional fish to be caught on a fly in the Wharfe and good enough to have a story attached to it anyhow.

17. Woodhouse Manor Farm.

For some reason most of my fishing before the war was done round the Barden stretch or up at Hebden, but during the war with The Lion as headquarters the Burnsall stretch was most convenient. Walking through Woodhouse Farm I would get a "good morning" from Harold Gill but no further. One day I met a lady whom I mistook to be Mrs.Gill and got into conversation. The lady turned out to be Kathleen Thompson who had been evacuated from Essex with her three children and was helping on the farm. This broke the ice, introductions were made and a firm friendship was struck up and still continues. Many fishermen have been entertained by Harold and Margaret and many members of the Club must be deeply indebted to them for the welcome cup of tea and cake which are so hospitably offered. Harold's son John now farms the land with his wife also called Margaret, Margaret senior still lives in part of the house, the friendly atmosphere continues and the pleasure of fishing the Woodhouse stretch is enhanced by this friendship. There was once a hamlet at Woodhouse where lead miners lived. The houses have been pulled down, the stones used elsewhere and all that remains is Woodhouse Manor and the remains of a much older house which is now known as Warter Barn.

18. An Experiment in Hydro-Electricity.

I cannot remember just when it started but someone made a statement to the effect that there was not sufficient flow in the Dibb to generate electricity. I was convinced that there was and to satisfy myself Harold Gill and I made a temporary dam across the stream, measured the flow over a "V" notch and surveyed the fall in order to find the most suitable spot for a turbine. I calculated that there was sufficient flow at low Summer level to generate 4 kilowatts. Fired with enthusiasm I referred to "Goodman's Hydraulics" and fortified with this elementary knowledge designed and made a vertical shaft propellor type turbine, using as a generator an old converted crane motor. In due course the plant was put to work and everyone at Woodhouse was delighted - except me, as the maximum output of the set was only 1 KW! However, the knowledge gained enabled me to find where the design went wrong and realise that with the restricted head available 4 KW. would be impossible without a specially shaped tail race. In due course Mark II turbine was built, this was a great improvement as it gave 2 KW. which proved to be the maximum continuous rated output of the generator. This set ran satisfactorily from 1946 with surprisingly few breakdowns. There was an interesting stoppage during the meat rationing period, the impellor was jammed by a putrid ham!

On Mark I model there was difficulty in getting the footstep bearing to stand up, Mark II impellor was carried on ball bearings which ran under water in a neutral pressure zone, in spite of predicted trouble from engineering friends this bearing stood up for over 11 years. The set was taken out of commission when power became available from the Grid.

19. Hartlington Mill.

Just above my turbine on the Dibb is Hartlington Mill which was occupied by Norman Clarke. This mill is driven by an overshot water wheel, 25 ft. diameter. The present wheel was put in in 1885. The mill's main purpose of grinding corn has been interposed with periods as a bobbin factory, a chair spindle factory, and finally as a generating station to supply Burnsall with electric light. Clarke told me that he produced 50 h.p. but

after measuring up the buckets and making allowance for loss of efficiency I calculated that the available power was only 12, this was confirmed by taking an ammeter reading. The generator charged accumulators but the dam was cracked and silted up so that the storage of water was negligible, this defect was offset by a private arrangement with the keeper of the compensation reservoir at Grimwith to open the sluice so that water reached the mill for about four hours in the evening, then another flush of water was let off for an hour in the morning to boost up the batteries which by this time were flat. Provided no power was used during the day this method was sufficient for lighting the village. Long before load shedding becamea National feature Clarke was up to this dodge and if he found load coming on during the day he would reduce voltage until a lamp would just glow. The advent of electric vacuum cleaners and irons was a serious embarrassment, so much so that power had to be disconnected during the day, with the exception of Sunday morning when it was needed for the church organ motor. The village soon discovered that power was available on Sundays and stayed away from church to do their vacuuming and ironing, this led to a further compromise that power would be available on Friday mornings for vacuums and irons provided the villagers played the game and did not use their appliances at other times.

As an engineer I was most interested in the wheel, which,with the exception of the nuts on the spokes, had been made without any machine work. The shaft was cast iron, the bull ring was cast in 24 sections bedded on to brackets with sal-ammoniac and iron borings. I had a look at a segment which was being replaced, the iron cement was as hard as the casting itself. The whole wheel was a clever bit of engineering. A relic of the bobbin days is still kept in the form of a lathe, this machine had been fitted up to turn bobbins automatically, an interesting point being a saddle on Vee slideways, the saddle being kept in contact with the bed by a weight suspended from a chain.

During floods the overspill of water sometimes started the wheel even though the sluice was closed, to prevent this Clarke anchored one of the spokes of the second motion pulley with a chain; when freeing this chain one night to start the wheel Clarke got caught in the shafting and would have been killed if his clothing had not given way, as it was he was taken round with the shaft several times.

While the bull ring was being repaired Clarke obtained a Diesel engine, this was during the war, and the authorities would not deliver oil in less than 500 gallon lots, Clarke was hard put to store this quantity of oil and every receptacle in the place was brought into use, including an old bath in the yard. Of course the oil stored in the open picked up leaves and other foreign matter but Clarke got over this by straining the oil through an old bowler hat.

The negotiations with the then Central Electricity Authority for Nationalisation of the mill were very protracted, eventually the changeover took place and power in Burnsall came from the Grid, but the C.E.A. could not shut the mill down as it was found that there was an old agreement to supply power to Hartlington Hall and this agreement could not be set aside without an Act of Parliament, so Clarke still ran his mill in spite of Nationalisation.

20. Engineers go Fishing.

About 1946 Philip Silk came fishing with me for a long weekend early in June, this fishing weekend continued with only one break for ten years; on later visits we were joined by Ben Butters, Albert Topping and Bill Sharp. Bill did not fish and was appointed beer boy. In business we each represented a competitive company of crane builders.

In spite of the fact that early June is supposed to be one of the best times of the season there was not one weekend in the 10 years when the conditions were ideal for fishing. There have been floods, droughts and gales: we kept hoping that one year we would hit the right conditions.

When the visits first took place food was in short supply and it was interesting to see how Philip and Ben, both living in London, enjoyed eggs; when I suggested getting some for them to take home they did not believe it possible; we collected, I think, three dozen: at it was illegal to have eggs in excess of the ration they were carefully packed in a Megger box and so disguised reached their destination in safety.

Due to adverse fishing conditions the catch on these trips has been small, but none the less the weekends have been a great success. Ben, who was a learner, fished at least three visits before he caught his first fish, a grayling out of season, but it had to be celebrated, first with beer and later with wine. Going out after dinner for the evening rise I waded in, tripped and fell flat on my face, in spite of the wetting I caught two fish; it was not until later that I realised that my fall was due to celebrating Ben's fish.

One perfect Sunday afternoon, perfect for everything except fishing, there was no water in the river and we lazed on the bank. Opposite to us was a picnic party, several members of which decided to bathe. One pretty young lady performed her undressing under a mackintosh, she proved very adept at this operation without exposing herself; needless to say we were brazenly watching the process, but just at a critical moment Ben remarked "did you tender for that Lisbon job?".

This incident reminds me of another story. Tom Rennard, the road mender, a real Dales character if ever there was one, used to be employed by the Club as an extra watcher at weekends. One of his jobs was to stop people bathing and spoiling the fishing. One day, seeing a party getting ready for a bathe he went up to them and the following dialogue took place:

Tom: "Haven't you got a bath at your house?"

Prospective bather: "Yes, but what business is that of yours?"

Tom: "Then why don't you wesh yourself at home, this watters dirty, it stinks and there's no knowing what you may get if yer weshes yersen in't river".

This astute approach proved an effective way of stopping the party from bathing.

21. Fishermens' Service.

When Canon Butterworth was Rector of Burnsall he introduced an annual fishermens' service on St.Peter's Sunday which ran for a number of years. One year he asked the Club if they would arrange for two members to present their rods to him at the altar. At the appropriate part of the service fishermen in the congregation were amazed to see two of their members processing up to the altar in full fishing garb, including waders and worming rods with hooks baited with worms. The fly fishing fraternity did not think that this was at all appropriate to the occasion! I think this was the last anglers' service, but whether the presentation of worming gear at the altar was the cause of the Service ceasing or not I am unable to say. Quite a number of rectors have been incumbents of Burnsall during the years I have fished the river but never one with any knowledge or interest in fishing, though two have had fishing names 7 "Place" and "Pike!"

Burnsall Church is one of the gems of Norman churches which one finds in Wharfedale; at one time the rectors of Thorpe and Burnsall had to share this church, each rector had his own churchwardens, to this day there are still four wardens, two for each parish. During a service I noticed that the churchwardens' wands appeared to be cut down billiard cues, quite out of keeping with the, dignity of the church so I promised that when I retired from business and had spare time available I would make some wands and present them to the church

However my working life went past the normal retirement age so in order to make sure that the promise was kept I got my Apprentices at Clyde Crane & Booth Ltd., Rodley, to make stainless steel crosses, I merely produced and fitted the oak staves which carry the crosses.

In 1972 the Club made me an Honorary Member, I would like to place on record my appreciation of this honour and thank Members for acknowledging my work in furthering the Club's interests over quite a number of years.

APPENDIX 2.

Aide Memoire by John Baker, 6th February,1973.

Abstraction of water from the River Wharfe and enlarged Grimwith Reservoir.

Public Enquiry held at Bradford Town Hall

commencing January 10th,1973.

The Meeting was presided over by an Inspector and an Assessor who was an Engineer.

It was held in the Council Chamber which was a most suitable room for holding a Meeting of this type.

The Bradford Corporation and the Yorkshire River Authority turned out in full force represented by a Q.C. (Boydell) and Junior, plus all officials of the Bradford Corporation and the River Authority who were connected with this water abstraction scheme.

The objectors seemed very small fry, as far as the abstraction scheme was concerned there were only five who attended regularly, led by Cunliffe-Lister; the Burnsall Club was represented by Chris Hodgson and myself. The Leeds and Bradford Angling Associations were represented by:-

George Copley.

- Millington.

Dr.Cross, a biologist from Bradford University.

Other main objectors were the Chatsworth Estates (Bolton Abbey), who came partly under the Burnsall Club umbrella.

Previously we had had a hint that the Enquiry was likely to last 10 days and although the original intention was to engage Counsel plus an Engineer and a chemist, wisely as it turned out in the event, we dropped this idea on account of cost.

The first notable feature was the expertise with which the Corporation and the River Authority put forward their evidence. It had all been carefully prepared and co-ordinated, the witnesses giving evidence had obviously had plenty of previous experience and gave it in an expert manner whilst we had to learn as we went on. One particularly admired the way that all documents were prepared in advance and handed out to the parties concerned immediately prior to each witness being examined. One also had to admire the fairness and the courtesy of the Inspector, this appreciation grew as the Enquiry progressed and the pains both he and the Assessor took to ensure that they got full information on every aspect, even though some of the witnesses for the objectors were not too clear in expressing their views.

The Bradford Corporation's Counsel and his Junior were experts on these matters, knew exactly how to handle the situation and exactly what evidence they needed to support the case.

At the end of the second day's hearing it became apparent that the objectors had not really a leg to stand on. The authorisation for the abstraction of water had already gone through, it did not seem to dawn on the representatives of the

Leeds and Bradford Angling Associations that whatever their objections to the scheme were they could not stop the abstraction below Ilkley, the fact that they were going to get 5 million gallons of compensation water per day under low water conditions at Ilkley did not seem to appeal to them as an improvement on present conditions.

Also they had an idea that by letting all the water from Grimwith down the Dibb they would be in a better position than allowing Bradford to make direct pipeline abstractions from Grimwith.

It was interesting listening to the evidence of Water Engineers, chemists, biologists,anti-pollution officers and Consulting Engineers on the construction of the reservoir and the proposals for treatment of the water after it had been extracted.

Briefly the scheme is to increase Grimwith from a storage capacity of 670 million gallons total capacity to 4,500 million gallons (of usable water), of this 2,500 million gallons would belong to Bradford, extracted in part by direct pipe extraction, the remaining 2,000 million gallons extracted down the Wharfe at Ilkley by the River Authority.

Bradford in the first phase were going to extract by pipe from Grimwith up to 9 m.g.d. later to be increased to 15 m.g.d.

Bradford had also permission to extract at Lobwood (above Ilkley, near Addingham),5,475 million gallons per annum, this to be taken in aggregate with the water extracted from Grimwith. The maximum rate of abstraction was not to exceed 1 million gallons per hour or 18 m.g.d.and no abstraction would take place when the river flow (measured at Ilkley Old Bridge) was less than 80 m.g.d.

The Craven Water Board also had a licence to extract 548 million gallons per annum at Lobwood with a maximum rate of abstraction of 110,000 gallons per hour and 2.5 m.g.d. and the rate of abstraction should not exceed 1.5 m.g.d. when the residual flow at Ilkley Old Bridge is less than 100 m.g.d.

Rombalds Water Board had an existing licence to extract water from the Wharfe at the Hollins:-

1 m.g.d.	when the measured flow at	Ilkley Old Bridge is	30 m.g.d.
2 m.g.d.	"	"	40 m.g.d.
3 m.g.d.	"	"	45 m.g.d.
4 m.g.d.	"	"	50 m.g.d.

The above flows were all exclusive of any compensation water being discharged from Grimwith.

This licence would be varied when the new Grimwith Reservoir was constructed to allow abstraction of 2,000 million gallons per annum at a maximum rate of 7.5 m.g.d. but the rate of extraction should not exceed 5.5 m.g.d. at times of flow of less than 100 m.g.d.

It was intended that when the residual flow at Ilkley Old Bridge, i.e. the flow remaining after the public water supply abstractions have taken place - falls below 50 m.g.d. the River Authority shall discharge an amount of water from Grimwith equivalent to the abstraction taking place up to 7 m.g.d. together with a compensation water discharge of 5 m.g.d., i.e. the regulating discharge is therefore to be 12 m.g.d. but the

Authority have power to discharge at the rate of 60 m.g.d. in order to be able to provide occasional freshets down the river, and it was proposed to allow sufficient water down the Dibb to support existing fish life and the flow would never fall below 0.5 m.g.d. measured at Hartlington Bridge.

It was underlined that the compensation discharge down the Dibb of 0.5 m.g.d. would be made continuously at all times when the natural unregulated flow at Ilkley is less than 50 m.g.d. It was pointed out that under existing conditions in 1970, during the 6 months from May to October, there were 69 days on which no discharge was made from Grimwith and on 29 of these days the flow in the Wharfe was such that under the proposed rules discharge would have to be made up to the abstraction and discharge compensation water i.e. this means that in a similar period of Weather conditions as existed in 1970 it could be possible that for 40 days the discharge down the Dibb would be only 0.5 m.g.d. just a wetting discharge to keep fish alive in the pools.

It became evident to me that our only chance of getting any variation was to get this minimum discharge down the Dibb increased and suggest that Bradford should reduce their pipe extraction and increase their pumping capacity at Lobwood. I pressed for 3 m.g.d. minimum discharge on the grounds that this was the sort of flow which had operated prior to recent years when the millowners started to operate the reservoir so that it emptied to the top discharge level,then closing the valve entirely until it filled up again; more recently since the Bradford Corporation had bought the millowners' water rights the reservoir has been emptied to the flushing level, partly to clear it for the rebuilding operation and partly because on the last two inspections it was considered unsafe.

I think from our point of view the biggest trouble we are going to be up against is during the 4 years whilst the reservoir is being constructed, we shall be continually hampered by cloudy water coming down and although we are offered compensation to our fishing rights it is going to be very difficult to prove this damage, the fact remains that our bottom stretch is going to be of less value until the scheme is completed. When the scheme is completed we shall be better off than we have been in the past when flow down Grimwith varied from 19 m.g.d. to nothing, which cannot be good for the stream.

One interesting outcome of the Enquiry is that the water in Grimwith is almost sterile, partly because it runs direct off the peat, partly because of its low Ph value, but mainly because of its cloudy condition light does not penetrate and promote algae growth. This is welcomed by the Bradford Corporation and is the reason for their direct pipeline, because water having no marine growth does not clog their filter beds and they can remove the discolouration by activated carbon treatment. The other interesting factor is that the water, in passing down the Dibb valley runs through limestone strata which puts up its Ph value, it also picks up some algae growth so that when it enters the main river (chemically) it is not vastly different from the Wharfe water except for its discolouration. Obviously it is to the Burnsall Club advantage for Bradford Corporation to extract by pipeline, we do not want all this sterile water going into the Dibb and the main river, also it would mean that the Dibb was more or less in a continuous state of flood.

Finally, though we may not have gained anything by the Enquiry, the point is that we have made objection, and the members of the fishing clubs, some 12,000 I think in all, will not be able to turn round and say that this abstraction scheme was allowed to go through without objection.

The atmosphere of the Enquiry was rather frigid to start with but it improved as work progressed and it was conducted amicably.

An interesting point was the timing - the moment the Town Hall clock finished striking its tenth stroke in a morning the Inspector opened the Enquiry, the same after the luncheon break, the Enquiry opened as soon as the clock had finished striking 2 p.m. Everybody realised this and there was no time lost due to those attending not being ready.

The position now is that we have got to await the Inspector's Report.

APPENDIX 3.

Extracts from John Baker's Speech outlining the History of the Club at the Centenary Dinner Friday, 25th May,1973

Mr.President,Mr.Chairman, Your Honour, Gentlemen -

For this Centenary Year it is particularly appropriate that Your Grace should have kindly accepted the office of President of our Club. On behalf of all present we welcome you in person. Your great-grandfather promised to support a Club if formed: it gives us pleasure to find that four generations later we still receive support from the same family.

The Club attained its majority in 1894, the event is recorded - "It is not now the babe it was at its birth - that would be opposed to the course of nature" The entrance fee had been increased from 1 to 3 guineas which is expressed in a note:

> "Now gentlemen who receive the honour of election to this highly desirable and well accustomed length mark their gratitude by a deposit of three times that amount ! ".

Tonight the Club is celebrating its 100th birthday, I can report that it is thriving and our stretch of interesting and fishable water is the envy of many other Clubs.

Diverting for a moment - Henry VIII, apart from his reputation for wives, was as astute in acquiring revenue as any modern Chancellor of the Exchequer, not only did he dissolve the Monastries and confiscate their wealth but he sold off the land he did not want for the Crown to his Noblemen. Part of the Bolton Abbey Estate came into the possession of the Dukes of Devonshire through their forebears, the Earl of Cumberland in 1542, in consideration of a sum of lawful money of England. No doubt a forced 'buy' as no one would want to invest in such a remote estate, and, if the farming tenants were as good at losing sheep at the annual counts as they are today, the income by way of tithes would be negligible!

Your Grace: by maintaining this estate intact it has provided pleasure not only for fishermen but to all the people who visit Wharfedale - long may this land remain in the ownership of your family.

100 years ago life in Upper Wharfedale must have been hard indeed. Dams to supply mills with water power on the lower reaches of the river had stopped the run of salmon which was an important supplement to the food supply. The Bradford Corporation had completed its Barden Reservoir Scheme thus denying the river of most of the spawning streams on the right bank, Hebden Beck and Skyreholme Beck were polluted by the washings from lead mines. The local community had resorted to extensive netting of trout. This was the state of the river when the Club acquired some fishing rights. Not an Elysian stretch of virgin water.

By inference the Club's initial fishing was on the right bank from Burnsall Bridge to Drebley Stepping Stones, and on the left bank from below Mill Islands to Drebley Stepping Stones. In 1878 it looks as if the Club had lost the fishing rights on the left bank as it is stated that the Club's reserves extend from Burnsall Bridge down to the Stepping Stones at Drebley, a distance of over 3 miles - "The preserves abound with trout and

grayling" - I suspect that this last sentence was inserted to ameliorate disappointed members. In 1880 the Duke of Devonshire, through his Steward, gave consent for the Club to extend the preserves down to Barden Bridge on condition that His Grace's rights were in no way interfered with. From 1884 for a short time the Club had all the fishing rights from Linton Stepping Stones to Barden Bridge, most of the fishing was rent free except for a length through Woodhouse Farm for which the Club paid £4 per year, including the use of the Suspension Bridge.

As the fishing improved the owners began to ask for rents, but it was not until 1909 that the Club was asked to pay rent in return for the exclusive use of the Duke's water. Even so the rent asked was reduced by £8.10.0. based on the premise that the water opposite the New Inn was useless due to the disturbance by New Inn anglers. No doubt the same claim will be put forward, Your Grace, when our present tenancy agreement becomes due for renewal.

Bridges are an important item from a fisherman's point of view, especially when the river is too high to cross by the stepping stones. The Hebden Suspension Bridge opened in September 1885, the Club was asked to subscribe £5 towards the cost of this bridge, they only gave £3, later they relented and gave an additional £1. One Tree Bridge at Drebley which was swept away in a flood about 1937 is recorded as being erected in 1903 by the Duke of Devonshire. I measured One Tree Bridge, it was a single piece of pine, 18" square by 80 ft. long. The recording of the date of One Tree Bridge seems to destroy the local story that it was a gift to a former Duke some 125 years ago and was towed across the Atlantic behind a sailing ship.

River Watchers, Netting and Staking. In 1874 two river watchers were appointed, a Mr.Bland and Mr.Wall, they were paid £1 each and asked to the annual dinner: obviously a part time job. In 1878 it was resolved that Mr.James Newbold be treated with to become watcher at 10/- per week, part of his duties being to "thorn" the river. Later the same year a Mr.Josephus Inman was engaged as a second watcher. Two watchers for 3 miles of river - evidently poaching was rife ! In 1884 the watcher urged the piling of the Lythe House water as soon as possible.

In 1887 a summons was taken out against Mr.William Bell, the blacksmith at Hebden, for using a cowl net. A member, Mr.Tetley, was reported for fishing on a Sunday. A letter was sent to him pointing out that it was contrary to the custom of the neighbourhood and likely to bring discredit to the Club. This had no effect as Tetley was caught fishing on a Sunday again and threatened with expulsion.

In 1888 a Mr.Martindale was appointed watcher. Martindale was evidently not a satisfactory watcher and in 1892 he received a letter from the Secretary as follows: "Mr.Martindale - Sir, Several matters affecting your conduct as River Watcher have been brought under the notice of the Committee. They think it is their duty to lay these allegations before you, and ask for your written full explanation, on receipt of which the Committee will investigate the charges and acquaint you with their determinations". Then followed a list of six complaints, including "That you are often under the influence of drink and spend an unreasonable amount of time in the Public Houses of the neighbourhood".

"The Committee further regret to hear that you are in considerable debt in the neighbourhood, which if correct is also very prejudicial to the interests of the Club".

There is no record of the reply but it is minuted by the Committee that the drinking charge was completely unfounded, and they hoped that it would never be substantiated; they were also pleased to hear that he was not in debt.

In 1893 Mr.Geo.Sedgwick - John Gill, it was your maternal grandfather I think? became tenant of Woodhouse Farm. Previously he had been prosecuted for using a cowl net and tried to get his own back by doubling the rent of the fishing from £5 to £10. After much bargaining the rent was agreed at £5 plus £1 for himself. The rent evidently being the perquisite of the Landlord.

In 1893 Martindale's engagement was terminated, this led to the appointment of Mr.Tom Moore and was the commencement of the satisfactory association with the Moore family. Tom being followed by his son Willie and later by Willie's brother Tom, who we are sorry could not be here tonight for us to say thank you for the loyal and efficient service given for near 80 years by your family. In 1913, after 20 years service, the Committee agreed to grant Tom Moore a holiday - 5 days ! We are also pleased to welcome our present watcher, Joe Smith, who seems to be carrying on the Moore tradition. In 1898 staking the river was still necessary, 200 stakes being put in between Woodhouse Suspension Bridge and Barden Bridge.

1906. A prelude of trouble to come from canoeists: Bell, the blacksmith, placed a boat on the water for hire! The Club took Counsel's opinion and were advised that they had no standing as far as trespass was concerned, it was for the riparian owner to take action. The situation was settled by the Club becoming the tenant of the land. Reading between the lines it is evident that there was resentment from some local residents when the Club acquired the fishing rights.

Dinners. From early days it has been the custom of the Club to entertain riparian owners and farmers at an Annual Dinner. Dinners have not been continuous, there were times when the Club was too hard up to afford a dinner and they had to be discontinued during the two World Wars. The first Dinner was held at the Rose & Crown,Ilkley, in 1875. On Feb.22nd, 1896, the Dinner record is "day dry but cold wind. Roads in very good condition. Moon half full" - most important considerations when some diners had to walk down the Dale to Ilkley. The 1900 Dinner records state that there was a snowstorm prevailing and it would have been impossible for Dalesfolk to get to the Dinner, but they had all previously declined due to illness, weddings and influenza. Then in a different hand is a note: N.B. there was a concert at Burnsall the same evening!

1906. The Dinner was held at The Red Lion,Burnsall, 30 sat down. Listen to this Keith Webb - the bill is itemised:-

30 dinners	£3.12.6.
35 cigars	.8.9.
Drinks	.14.1.
Drivers and horses	.4.0.
Total cost:	£4.19.4.

Fishing and Fish Rearing.

100 years ago the Stone Fly was prolific. In 1877 it was agreed that the keeper issues a notice on the appearance of the Stone Fly and up to the 1st of June none but members be allowed to fish. The fishing of course being by means of the creeper, nowadays it is more difficult to find a creeper than catch a fish. In 1898 there was a freak hatch of Green Drake and it was noted that at such time an idea may be got as to the size and quantity of fish in the water. Several references are made to the growing shortage of fly life and there is no doubt that the treatment of roads by tar spraying, which commenced about 1914, played havoc with the fly life. The fishing was disturbed and the fly population further reduced by the water being run off from the dam at Linton, the sluice being completely closed while the dam was filled. In 1916 the Committee endeavoured to meet the Mill manager and received the following terse reply:-

> "Dear Sir, We are in receipt of your letter of the 18th inst. requesting an appointment to discuss the stoppage of the river during dry season.
>
> The writer appreciates your wishes not to have your sport destroyed, at its correct value.
>
> He regrets the destruction of fish caused by the necessity of closing down the river, but has no intention of discussing the matter.
>
> Yours truly,
>
> F.W.Lowcock".

The feud with the Mill manager had been going on for some time. During a dry spell in 1914 some men belonging to the Mill trapped a fish weighing 7 lbs. 12 oz. which got marooned in a rock pool. The Minute Book records that - quoting : "This fish was set up and the Committee presumed that he is now adorning the front room of Mr.Lowcock's house, the owner relating with much pride how he made the capture early one Summer morning by baiting with maggots". Unquote.

The Committee were advised that they had no legal redress against the usage of the Dam and had best direct their efforts to getting rid of the Mill manager, but the trouble from the Dam went on until about 1956 when the C.E.G.B. became responsible for the supply of electric power to Grassington.

Right through the records runs the story of efforts made to stock the river, evidently the lack of spawning streams was apparent. The first mention of artificial hatching was in 1880 when the Club acquired five hatching boxes. In 1881 the Committee expressed a desire to introduce some thousands of fry into the river but was unable to do so due to members being late with their subscriptions.

In 1890 there is a Minute as follows:- " It is interesting to note that gradually another style of angling is coming into vogue viz. the use of the worm in low clear water…… that those using the worm did very well".

It became practice for some members to publicise their catches and in 1891 the Committee passed this rebuke to members:- "They suggest that if members are satisfied with the Club's waters it would be well to bear that satisfaction heroically within their own breasts rather than excite the curiosity and envy of anglers who have not the remotest chance of becoming members".

In 1895 the size limit was increased from 7 to 8". The size limit being increased to 9" in 1945. It is a moot point whether this latter increase in size limit helps the river's fish crop.

In 1897 efforts were made to supply supplementary food for the fish by introducing suitable weeds and fresh water crustaceans - evidently without success. A lot of time was spent in trying to find a suitable site for a fish hatchery, but it was not until 1897 that permission to make a rearing pond in Hag Wood was obtained from the Duke's steward.

Over the years there were discussions regarding the quantity of grayling, somethimes shortages other times excess: on several occasions quantities of grayling were netted out which did not appear to make much difference.

There was a nice custom of presenting each riparian owner annually with a dish of fish, but in time catching sufficient fish became a difficult matter. In 1889 81 fish were given as presents to riparian owners but these were taken by the Duke's keeper, Hudson, with a net at night. From then onwards netting had to be resorted to to supply riparian owners. This obligation evidently weighed heavily on the Club because in 1901 there is a note that between September 4th and 20th all the old stakes were taken out to allow Hudson to run his net, these stakes were replaced by the addition of 350 new ones. Joe Hudson was an expert at netting fish, he had to be because when the shooting lodge was occupied by the Duke's party in August the chef would send him orders for trout fresh trout mark you - as there were no cold storage facilities. Eventually, in a year of low water, the riparian owners were advised that it was no longer practicable to supply them with fish any longer.

1901 was a bad year for fishing, a member reported the reason for this as follows:- "An enterprising solicitor of Ilkley, in his motor car, was to be seen scaring the grouse and cattle by flying up one side of the river and down the other, thus creating a vacuum and evolving endless ..... small thunderstorms no doubt this disturbance in this peaceful valley has frightened all the fish in the length and he hoped their legal friend in future would move more slowly, and not rush through at about 27 miles per hour: "

The efforts to stock the river did not meet with marked success until our present Chairman, Bill Craven, took the matter in hand, he introduced fry from fast growing ova, started feeding on a balanced diet, which made it possible, at an economical cost, to stock with sizeable fish. This has greatly improved the fishing and we are indebted to our Chairman and his small band of helpers for all the work they do in maintaining the stock in the river.

Fishermen.

There have been many expert fishermen members of the Club, but with the exception of one of the original members, Slyvester Lister, of Barden Towers, no record is made of their special ability. One infers that Lister spent more time fishing than farming. Some of the experts come to mind: Harfield Edmonds, who in conjunction with Norman Lee, also a member, produced the classic book "Brook and River Trouting".

The all time expert low water upstream worm fisherman was undoubtedly John Kilburn. Though not a member one must not omit to mention Harry Woods who in his day with the fly was possibly the most skilful of the lot. Later there was Jack Ackroyd and Reg. Righyni who could be classed as expert grayling fishers. There was also the late Billy Lumbly who as a schoolboy, using an early design of fixed spool reel, developed an uncanny accuracy in casting; much to the annoyance of members who had a minnow plonked just where their flies were fishing. Later he became the envy of members for the variety of pretty girls he used to bring: presumably to watch him fish!

I remarked earlier that the reservation of the fishing for members was resented by some local inhabitants: but no Club can flourish for 100 years without a good liaison with riparian owners, local inhabitants, plus a hard working Committee, particularly the Presidents or Chairmen, Secretaries and Treasurers.

The fact that our official guests tonight consist of riparian owners and local residents shows that the Club has indeed very good relationships with you. A number of you bear the same family names as your forebears with whom we have been dealing since the Club was formed. Whilst you have all helped the Club in one way or another I feel that you will not mind if I single out one or two for special mention. There is the Estate Office at Bolton Abbey, Mr.Hey still looks after our affairs, his successor, Mr.Sheard, is welcomed at his first Club Dinner, which I hope will be one of many. There is the Dawson family. We are pleased to see Philip here tonight. There are Keith and Marjory Webb of The Red Lion, prior to them his brother Derek, and of course his mother, who had the difficult task of providing our fare during the War period. Then the Gill family: firstly Harold and Margaret, followed by John and Margaret II, each of whom have been so kind to members who fish the Woodhouse stretch.

I cannot go through the names of all the Officers of the Club who have helped down the years but again there are several notables I would like to mention. There is the Founder of the Club, W.Kendall, who held the office of Treasurer for 9 years. There was T.J.Critchley who was Secretary from 1875 for a period of 18 years; there was J.V.Burrows who came on to the Committee in 1882 and acted as Chairman without missing a Meeting until 1894. There was Joshua Hart who came on to the Committee in 1883 and became Chairman in 1908, the year of his death. After considering various ideas the Committee decided to contribute £50 towards the cost of the Burnsall Village Hall as the Fund was £300 short of the estimated cost of £700. There is a memorial plaque to Mr.Hart in the Hall. The builder's cost was £365.5.9. for a sizeable stone building! George Morrell had a long session, joining the Committee in 1882, becoming Secretary in 1894, and remaining in office for 29 years.

Finally there is the present trio, our Chairman, Bill Craven, Secretary, Chris Hodgson and Treasurer, Roger Baker, who combine to keep the Club's affairs in good order, from a fishing, housekeeping and financial point of view.

A list of persons who attended the Centenary Dinner.

Guests of the Club.

F.M.Clayton.,J.M.Daggett.,Philip Dawson.,T.Gamble., D.Gill., J.Gill.,C.Hagar.,W.Hannam.,E.E.Hey.,D.H.Holme.,Wing-Cdr. A.Knowles-Fitton.,Judge D.O.McKee.,J.Naylor.,M.L1.Parry.,The Rev. H.D.Pike.,H.Riley., M.Sayer.,J.M.Sheard.,I.Simpson.,J.Smales. ,J.Smith.,A.Stockdale.,W.Stockdale., R.Stott.,J.E.Thwaite. ,H.E.Walker.,T.E.Walker.,K.Webb.,E.Wright.,T.Utley.

Members and their (Guests).

John Baker (E.G.Carter.,Simon Baker., D.Downs.,Prof.F.F.Hellier., W.Irwin.,J.Barrett.,Dr.G.Hawbrook.,J.Stead).
J.R.Baker.,(A.Crossley).
A.G.Baker.,(J.V.Parry.,M.Gwynne).
N.Bancroft, not present, (J.Mackerell.,R.Feather.,K.Wilson).
H.G.Bottomley.,(J.E.Hill). R.W.Bussey.,(D.Hield.,G.Cumming., S.Keeling).
A.Carter.,(W.Sharp.,R.Carter). T.P.Cliffe.,Dr.J.B.Cook.,(J.Booth).
J.H.Craven.,(E.Williams.,T.Hardy., W.Mathewson.,L.Ferens).
His Grace the Duke of Devonshire., E.R.Fisher.,
R.Fox.,(D.Harris).
G.Gilpin.,(R.B.Brown).
J.B.Haigh.,(T.Reynoldson).
C.Hodgson.,(T.Charlton.,)
N.Hodgson.,(John Hodgson.,A.Macauly.,D.Ackroyd).
J.Landless.,(J.L.Hartley.,J.Berry).
W.H.Lax.,(N.H.Marriner).
Dr.T.S.Marshall., (E.H.Wood.,N.Gaunt).
Dr.P.B.Odgers.,
A.H.Ogden.,(G.Pawson).
J.Ogden., (J.A.Musgrave). D.R.Pickup.,(C.R.Taylor).
Dr.J.D.Pickup.,(Dr.L.Watson).
F.Pickles.,(W.R.Pickles).
Dr.W.G.Platt.,(C.L.Forbes).
W.Scatchard., (S.M.Throup).
D.Simpson.,(A.S.White.,J.Lloyd).
K.H.Spencer.,(L.Stott., P.Todd).
A.E.Stanier., J.M.Sykes.,
L.Warnett.,(J.Checkley.,M.Rochol., H.E.Dracup).
J.Wilkinson.