

The American Fly Fisher

SUMMER 1994 VOLUME 20 NUMBER 3



THE AMERICAN MUSEUM
OF FLY FISHING

*Preserving a Rich Heritage
for Future Generations*

TRUSTEES

- | | |
|---------------------|-----------------------|
| E. M. Bakwin | Robert F. Kahn |
| Michael Bakwin | Woods King III |
| Foster Bam | Martin D. Kline |
| William M. Barrett | Mel Kreiger |
| Bruce H. Begin | Ian D. Mackay |
| Paul Bofinger | Malcolm MacKenzie |
| Lewis M. Borden III | Robert E. Mathews II |
| Donn H. Byrne, Sr. | Bob Mitchell |
| Roy D. Chapin, Jr. | Wallace J. Murray III |
| Michael D. Copeland | Wayne Nordberg |
| Peter Corbin | Leigh H. Perkins |
| Thomas N. Davidson | Romi Perkins |
| Charles R. Eichel | O. Miles Pollard |
| G. Dick Finlay | Susan A. Popkin |
| Audun Fredrikson | Stephen Sloan |
| Arthur T. Frey | Arthur Siern |
| Reed Freyermuth | John Swan |
| Larry Gilsdorf | James Taylor |
| Gardner L. Grant | Richard G. Tisch |
| Terry Heffernan | James W. Van Loan |
| Curtis Hill | San Van Ness |
| James Hunter | Richard J. Warren |
| Dr. Arthur Kaemmer | Dickson L. Whitney |
| Earl S. Worsham | |

TRUSTEES EMERITUS

- | | |
|-----------------------|------------------|
| W. Michael Fitzgerald | Leon Martuch |
| Robert N. Johnson | Keith C. Russell |
| David B. Ledlie | Paul Schullery |

OFFICERS

- | | |
|------------------------------|-----------------------|
| <i>Chairman of the Board</i> | Foster Bam |
| <i>President</i> | Wallace J. Murray III |
| <i>Vice Presidents</i> | William M. Barrett |
| | Arthur Stern |
| <i>Treasurer</i> | Wayne Nordberg |
| <i>Secretary</i> | Charles R. Eichel |

STAFF

- | | |
|----------------------------|-------------------|
| <i>Executive Director</i> | Donald S. Johnson |
| <i>Executive Assistant</i> | Virginia Hulet |
| <i>Curator</i> | Alanna D. Fisher |
| <i>Registrar</i> | Jon C. Mathewson |
| <i>Research/Publicity</i> | Joe A. Pisarro |

THE AMERICAN FLY FISHER

- | | |
|---------------------------------|--|
| <i>Editor</i> | Margot Page |
| <i>Art Director</i> | Randall R. Perkins |
| <i>Copy Editor</i> | Sarah May Clarkson |
| <i>Publications Coordinator</i> | Alanna D. Fisher |
| <i>Offset Printing</i> | The Lane Press, Inc.,
Burlington, Vermont |



The American Fly Fisher

Journal of The American Museum of Fly Fishing

SUMMER 1994

VOLUME 20 NUMBER 3

Antique Colors for Atlantic Salmon Flies	2
<i>Ray R. Smith</i>	
The Fish Prints of S. F. Denton	10
<i>Charles Steinhacker</i>	
The Evolution of the Salmon Fly	14
<i>T. E. Pryce-Tannatt</i>	
Gallery: Omar Needham Collection	19
Notes & Comment:	
Thomas Bewick, Wood Engraver	20
<i>Jeffrey Norton</i>	
Letters	22
In Memoriam:	
Ed Zern 1910-1974	23
<i>Joe Pisarro</i>	
Museum News	26
Contributors	28

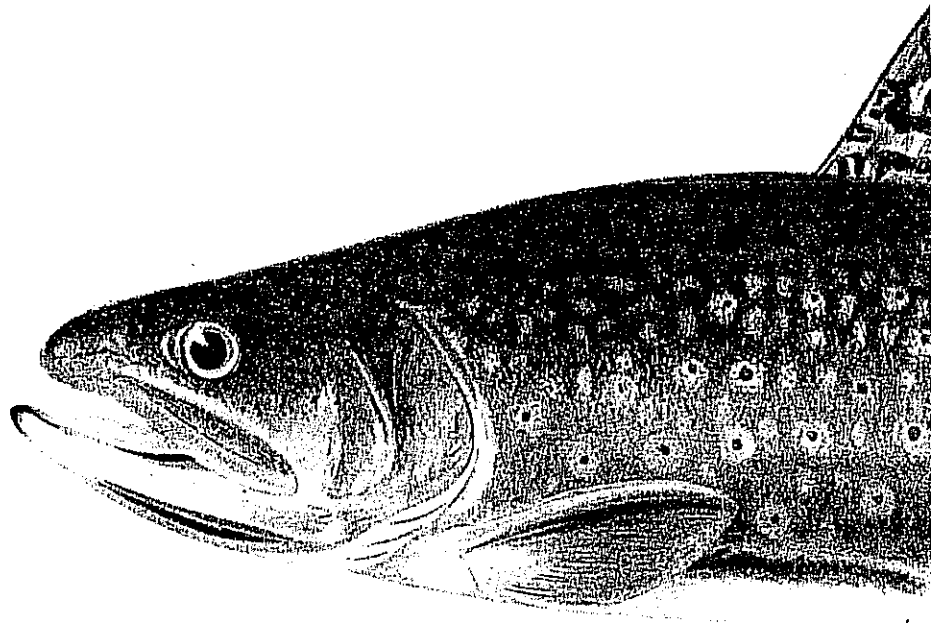
ON THE COVER: *In this Summer 1994 issue, Ray Smith reveals nineteenth-century techniques for dying fly-tying materials with such natural ingredients as walnut skins, ground-up insects, and brazilwood. The cover illustration is a page from William Blacker's Art of Flymaking (1855), one of the Museum library's finest antique volumes.*

The American Fly Fisher is published

four times a year by the Museum at P.O. Box 42, Manchester, Vermont 05254.

Publication dates are winter, spring, summer, and fall. Membership dues include the cost of a one-year subscription (\$20) and are tax deductible as provided for by law. Membership rates are listed in the back of each issue. All letters, manuscripts, photographs, and materials intended for publication in the journal should be sent to the Museum. The Museum and journal are not responsible for unsolicited manuscripts, drawings, photographic material, or memorabilia. The Museum cannot accept responsibility for statements and interpretations that are wholly the author's. Unsolicited manuscripts cannot be returned unless postage is provided. Contributions to The American Fly Fisher are to be considered gratuitous and the property of the Museum unless otherwise requested by the contributor. Articles appearing in this journal are abstracted and indexed in *Historical Abstracts* and *American History and Life*. Copyright © 1994, the American Museum of Fly Fishing, Manchester, Vermont 05254. Original material appearing may not be reprinted without prior permission. Second Class Permit postage paid at Manchester Vermont 05254 and additional offices (USPS 057410). The American Fly Fisher (ISSN: 0884-3562)

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to The American Fly Fisher, P.O. Box 42, Manchester, Vermont 05254.



Denton

The Fish Prints of S. F. Denton

S. F. DENTON, the artist whose extraordinary chromolithographs documenting various species of North American fish and wildlife would illustrate the State of New York Fisheries, Game, and Forest Commission's Annual Reports from 1895 to 1909, is here profiled by noted photographer Charles Steinhacker.

WILL THE REAL S. F. Denton please stand up? Naturalist, artist, adventurer, entrepreneur, collector, inventor, and author—it was difficult to pin the man down. His diversity of interest was the by-product of a passionate and tenacious curiosity about the natural world. To do such a full life justice would require a far-ranging dissertation on such topics as moths and butterflies (for which he received the most immediate fame), birds, insects, fossils, freshwater pearls, and gems, all of which he and his brothers collected throughout the world and sold to museums and private buyers. Then we would need to review his published

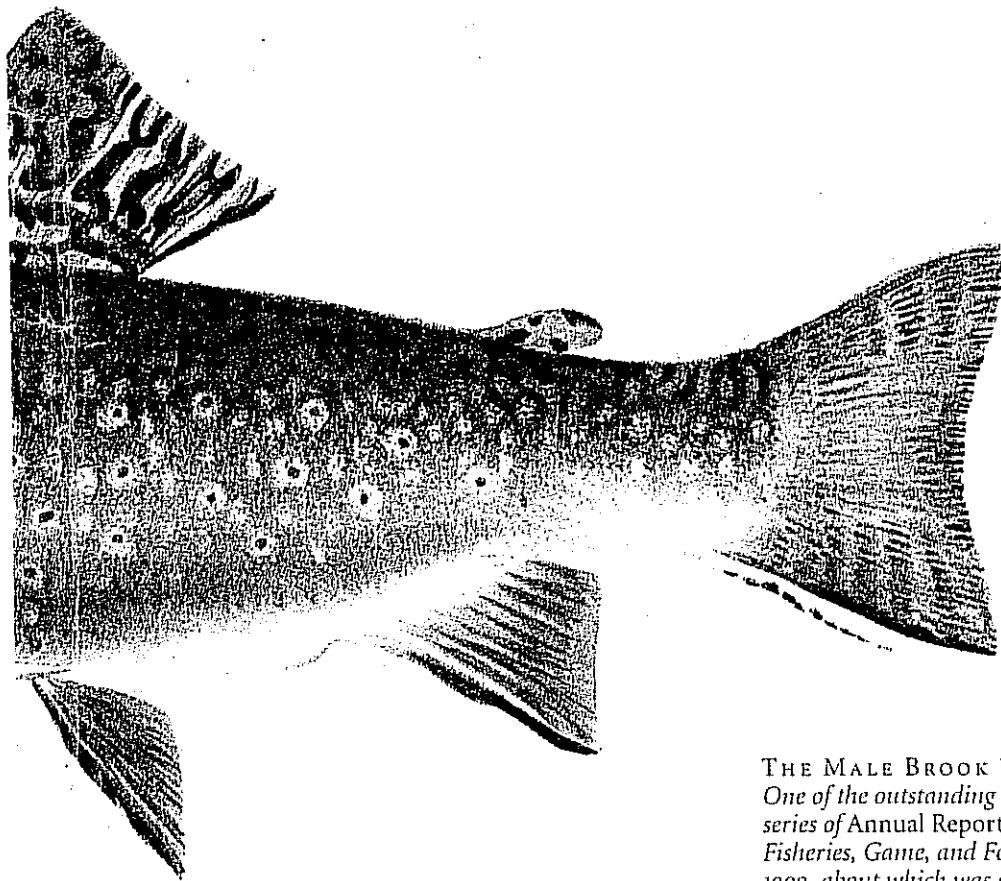
books and other professional and private writings. And we would be remiss if we failed to shed some light on Denton the businessman who had a commercial streak that bordered on showmanship. Only then would we be in a position to even consider his fish mounting and coloring methodology as well as his exquisite watercolor paintings of fresh- and saltwater fish.

Since the focus here is exclusively on Denton's fish art, the introduction above serves to provide the reader with a feel for the scope and breadth of the man, and particularly an appreciation for the rare and magical blend of the scientist and the artist that came together so persuasively in a single human being.

Born Sherman Foote Denton in 1856, the eldest son of William Denton, young Sherman taught himself how to draw while accompanying his father on his lecture tours around the United States, Australia, and New Zealand. Following his father's untimely death from jungle

fever in the wilds of New Guinea, Denton returned home and was employed by the United States Fish Commission (the equivalent of today's U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service). It was during his tenure in Washington that he developed and patented a method for mounting fish that preserved their vivid original colors. Until then, all previously mounted fish specimens were mere shadows of their natural reality. Denton had discovered how to make them "live" again. So perfect were his fish models that orders poured in from state fish commissions and museums around the country, including the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, the Field Museum in Chicago, and the Agassiz Museum at Harvard University. Alexander Agassiz wrote, "I have seen the best that Italy, France, Germany, and England can show in the way of mounted fishes and your work is far and away ahead of them all."

As part of his fish-mounting process, Denton made watercolor paintings of all



THE MALE BROOK TROUT (*Salvelinus fontinalis*).
One of the outstanding chromolithographs included in the series of Annual Reports published by the State of New York Fisheries, Game, and Forest Commission between 1895 and 1909, about which was said "no colored figures of fishes in existence exceed them for truthfulness or beauty of execution."

by Charles Steinhacker

the fish that he had personally collected in America, Europe, Hawaii, and the West Indies as well as those that were sent to him packed in ice from all over the world. Many of these watercolors were used to illustrate the United States Fish Commission's reports.

It should be duly noted that the methods and schemes used by the collector to catch his fish would not be appreciated by your friendly fish and game warden today. Denton was believed to have utilized a secret berry mixed with bread which when cast upon the water would intoxicate the fish and render them defenseless. And he was reputed to have employed certain mysterious roots that he ground up and dropped into a boat half filled with water. When the boat was capsized the fish would swarm all around it, whereupon they would become instantly asphyxiated and thus quite collectable. In short, Denton's unconventional fishing methods just might have given him the edge over a No. 18 Quill Gordon on a 9x tippet.

The State of New York Fisheries, Game, and Forest Commission hired Denton to paint various species of North American fish and wildlife. The original chromolithographs were reproduced from the paintings in a series of extraordinary books called *Annual Reports* that were published between 1895 and 1909. The plates included fresh- and saltwater fish, each identified by its English and Latin names, as well as a few nonfish subjects,—lobsters, oysters, deer, and pheasant—that were signed "Denton" or "S. F. Denton," though some contained no signature. In all, 105 of his prints were published in this pre-eminent set of books, of which ninety-nine were pure fish images. The combination of Denton's unmatched skill as a fish artist and the exceptional quality of the plates (New York State spared nothing in its dedication to excellence of reproduction) quickly established these prints as the very finest fish art ever done.

As part of the *Seventh Annual Report of 1901* (published in January of 1902),

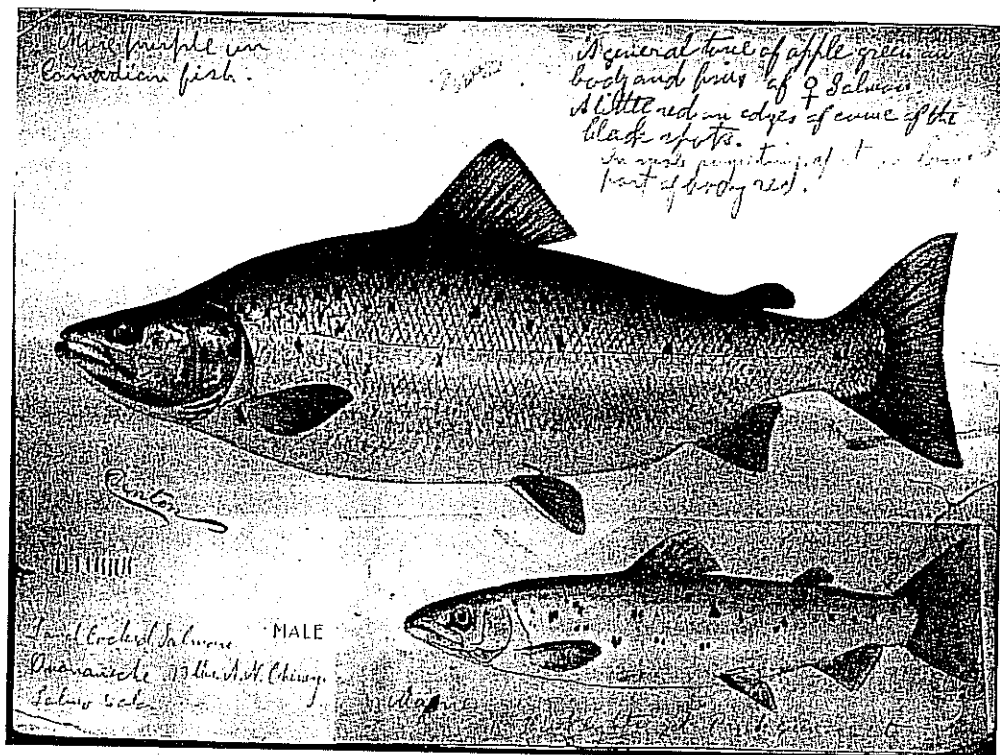
and due largely to public demand; the Commission produced a supplementary portfolio containing all of the Denton prints that had been published up to that time.

The Denton fish prints can be found in three different sizes: 8 inches x 11 $\frac{1}{4}$ inches (cloth-bound volumes), 7 $\frac{3}{4}$ inches x 10 $\frac{3}{8}$ inches (leather-bound volumes), and 9 $\frac{1}{8}$ inches x 12 inches (portfolio). In each case, however, the size of the fish is the same; only the trim size varies. A complete list of the Denton prints appears on page 13.

The remarkable quality of Denton's work is referred to in the preface of the *First Annual Report*:

Mr. Sherman F. Denton, the Artist of the United States Fish Commission, was engaged to make sixteen color drawings of fishes and game, and this he did so faithfully that they will serve to identify the originals of the drawings, for fin rays and scale formation are as faithfully represented as the external colors of the subjects.

MALE LANDLOCKED SALMON.
 Depicted, apparently, is a 13-pound specimen from Canada (where the fish is called "Ouananiche") and perhaps caught or otherwise provided by A. N. Cheney, State of New York fish culturist. Denton has pasted on to the bottom of the print a rather primitive watercolor of a young Maine landlocked salmon for purposes of comparison. Some of his notes read: "More purple in Canadian fish" and "a general tone of apple green on body and fins of female Salmon. A little red on edges of some of the black spots. In male sometimes spots on lower part of body red."

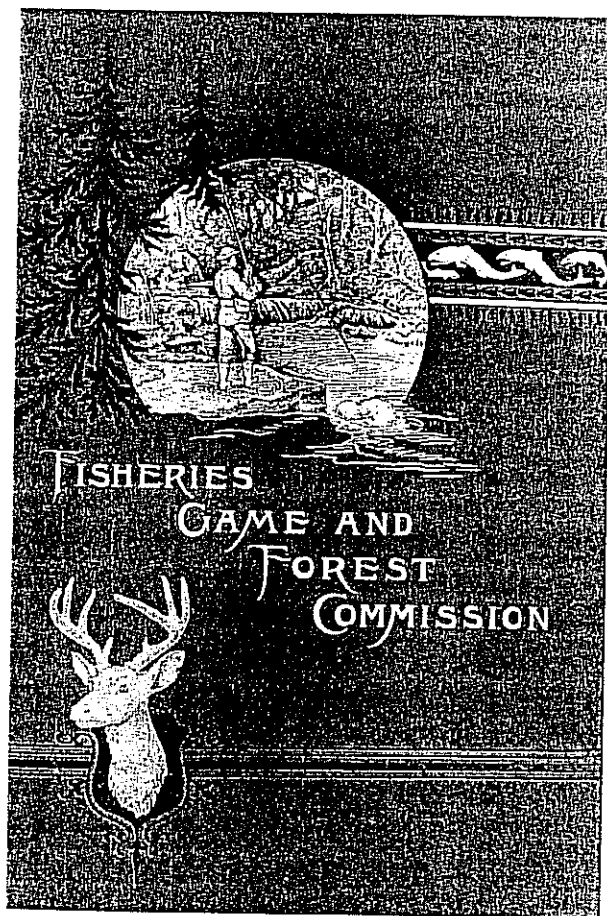


These color-drawings have been reproduced so exactly, that no colored figures of fishes in existence exceed them for truthfulness or beauty of execution. They are absolutely faithful reproductions, which can be said of no other work of this kind.

The same can still be said today. The original chromolithographs first appeared almost 100 years ago and remain the standard by which all other fish art, past and present, is judged.

Until recently it had been a relatively simple matter to obtain the Denton print of your choice. The New York State books were seemingly everywhere. Used book shops had them in generous quantities and one could find them for as little as a dollar or two at tag sales and flea markets. But when print dealers began to sense the popularity of these images, they bought up all the books they could get their hands on and stripped them of their Denton plates. Today it has become extremely difficult, if not impossible, to find the most popular of the Denton fish prints. And prices have skyrocketed accordingly. Striped Bass, Bluefish, Brook Trout, and Brown Trout are currently the prints in greatest demand and their prices are all in excess of \$100. The same is true of most of the other trout prints (Denton painted fifteen different trout images) as well as the salmon and the large- and small-

The first Annual Report of the Commissioners of Fisheries, Game and Forests of the State of New York (1895). Some of Denton's most popular fish prints were published in this first book.



The Complete List of Denton Prints

FISH PRINTS

Adirondack Frost Fish/Round White Fish
 Alewife/Branch Herring
 Bass, Calico
 Bass, Channel
 Bass, Large-Mouthed, Black
 Bass, Large- and Small-Mouthed, Black
 Bass, Rock
 Bass, Sea
 Bass, Small-Mouthed, Black
 Bass, Striped
 Bass, White
 Bergall/Cunner
 Bluefish
 Bonito
 Brook Sucker
 Bullhead
 Burbot
 Butter-Fish
 Carp
 Catfish, Spotted
 Channel Cat
 Cisco
 Cod
 Cod, Tom/Frost Fish
 Crappie
 Dog Fish/Mud Fish/Grindle (male and female)
 Drum, Freshwater
 Eel, Common
 Fall Fish/Silver Chub
 Flat Fish
 Flounder
 Gold Fish
 Golden Shiner/Bream
 Group: Mummichog, Fall Fish, Black-Nosed Dace, Common White Sucker
 Group: Red-Sided Minnow, Common Silverside (male), Creek Chub, Red-Nosed Minnow
 Group: Roach, River Chub, Common Silverside (female), Blunt-Nosed Minnow
 Haddock
 Hake
 Halibut
 Herring, Sea
 Kingfish
 Mackerel, Common
 Mackerel, Spanish
 Mackerel, Yellow
 Mascalonge
 Mascalonge (from Chautauqua Lake)
 Maskalonge (shown on fly)
 Menhaden
 Moon-Eye
 Perch, White
 Perch, Yellow or Barred
 Pickerel (from pond in Massachusetts)

Pickerel (from upper Hudson River)
 Pickerel, Banded
 Pike
 Pike Perch or Wall-Eyed Pike (Denton signature near edge of print)
 Pike Perch or Wall-Eyed Pike (signature properly placed)
 Pollack
 Pompano
 Pompano, Short
 Red Horse
 Red Snapper
 Rose Fish
 Salmon, Atlantic
 Salmon, Landlocked (female)
 Salmon, Landlocked (male)
 Scup/Porgy
 Shad
 Shad, Hickory
 Sheepshead
 Shiner, Golden or Bream
 Smelt
 Spade Fish-Triple Tail
 Steelhead or Salmon Trout
 Sunfish
 Sunfish, Blue Gill
 Sunfish, Long Eared
 Tautog
 Trout, Albino Brook
 Trout, Brook
 Trout, Brook (female)
 Trout, Brook (male)
 Trout, Brown
 Trout, Brown (Von Behr Trout)
 Trout, Canadian Red (female)
 Trout, Canadian Red (male)
 Trout, Canadian Red (young)
 Trout, Lake
 Trout, Rainbow
 Trout, Redthroa, Black Spotted, or Rocky Mountain
 Trout, Sunapee
 Trout, Sunapee or American Saibling (female)
 Trout, Sunapee or American Saibling (male)
 Trout, Tahoe
 Weak-Fish/Squeteague
 Whitefish
 Whitefish, Common (female)
 Whitefish, Common (male)
 Whiting

ADDITIONAL PRINTS

Deer, Virginia
 Lobster, American (female)
 Lobster, American (male)
 Oysters (natural size)
 Oysters, Enemies of the Pheasant, Mongolian or Ring-Necked



S. F. Denton as a young man.

mouthed bass. Adding to the increased market pressure is the fact that fish art is presently quite the "rage" for home and office decor.

For the discriminating collector, a few closing observations. The chromolithographic prints that appeared in the New York State books are of superior quality to those that comprised the portfolio. Indeed, it is almost certain that the folio prints were made from the book plates. However, it should be noted that the difference is a very fine point. And for many Denton collectors it is the folio prints, though of coarser dot structure than the original book prints, that are preferred for their aesthetically pleasing quality. In any case, the marketplace discerns no difference in price between the two types of lithographs.

Surely it was the mix of science, art, and romance so miraculously coalesced into one human spirit that enabled Denton to produce these superlative fish images. To look at the *Male Brook Trout* or the *Atlantic Salmon* on a cold and snowy January night is to admire the beauty of the fish we fish for . . . and will soon again. For if the truth be known, it may well have been the fish prints of Sherman Foote Denton that provided the comfort to see many an angler through the long and fishless winter.

S.F. DENTON FISH PRINTS

Sherman Foote Denton, naturalist and creator of the Denton fish prints, was born in 1856 in Wellesley, Massachusetts. At an early age he showed an intense interest in nature which he was able to combine with a budding artistic talent.

The young Denton taught himself how to draw and subsequently found employment as an artist for the U.S. Fish Commission at the Smithsonian Institute in Washington, D.C. between 1896 and 1899. His watercolors of North American fish were used to illustrate the Commission's reports.

Denton made drawings and mounted fish specimens for Alexander Agassiz, son of Harvard Professor Louis Agassiz, the famous oceanographer and marine biologist. Denton's mounted fish were highly praised by Agassiz who wrote: "I have seen the best that Italy, France, Germany and England can show in the way of mounted fishes and your work is far and away ahead of them all." In fact, Denton had perfected and patented a method for mounting and coloring the fish he had collected in America, Europe, Hawaii and the West Indies. His process enabled museums for the first time to display fish specimens with their vivid natural colors.

The State of New York Fisheries, Game and Forest Commission hired Denton to paint various species of fish and wildlife. The original chromolithographic prints were reproduced from the paintings in a series of books called "Annual Reports" between 1895 and 1907. A total of 103 different fish were painted by Denton during this twelve year period.

As part of the 7th Annual Report of 1901 (published in January of 1902), and due largely to public demand, the Commission produced a supplementary portfolio containing all of the Denton prints published up to that time.

The Denton fish prints can be found in three different sizes: 8" X 11 1/4" (cloth-bound volumes), 7 3/4" X 10 5/8" (leather-bound volumes) and 9 3/8" X 12" (folio). In each case, however, the size of the fish is the same.

The remarkable quality of Denton's work is referred to in the preface of the First Annual Report:

".....Mr. Sherman F. Denton, the artist of the United States Fish Commission, was engaged to make sixteen color drawings of fishes and game, and this he did so faithfully that they will serve to identify the originals of the drawings, for fin rays and scale formation are as faithfully represented as the external colors of the subjects.

These color-drawings have been reproduced so exactly, that no colored figures of fishes in existence exceed them for truthfulness or beauty of execution. They are absolutely faithful reproductions, which can be said of no other work of this kind."

And to this day the same can still be said. The original chromo-lithographic prints, which appeared in the ten New York State books, remain the standard by which all of the more recent fish art is judged.

For the discriminating collector, the following observations should be noted:

1. The prints that appeared in the books are of finer quality than those of the portfolio. (Indeed, it is likely that the folio prints were made from the book prints). However, having stated the above, the difference is a very fine point. And for some, the folio prints, though of coarser dot structure than the original book prints, may be more aesthetically pleasing. In any case, the marketplace discerns no difference in price between the two types of chromolithographs.

2. The most popular Denton images---the various trouts, the striped bass, bluefish, large and smallmouth bass, atlantic salmon etc.---are becoming almost impossible to find. Prices for these much-sought-after images are skyrocketing---if you can find them at all. Collectors would be well advised to make their purchases now before they disappear altogether from the market.

THE DENTON FISH IMAGES

Adirondack Frost Fish/Round White Fish
Alewife/Branch Herring
Bass, Calico
Bass, Channel
Bass, Large Mouthed Black
Bass, Large and Small Mouthed Black
Bass, Rock
Bass, Sea
Bass, Small Mouthed Black
Bass, Striped
Bass, White
Bergall/Cunner
Bluefish
Bonito
Brook Sucker
Bullhead
Burbot
Butter-Fish
Carp
Catfish, Spotted
Channel Cat
Cisco
Cod
Cod, Tom/Frost Fish
Crappie

Dog Fish/Mud Fish/Grindle
Drum, Fresh Water
Eel, Common
Fall Fish/Silver Chub
Flat Fish
Flounder
Gold Fish
Golden Shiner/Bream
Group: Mummichog, Fall Fish, Black Nosed Dace,
Common White Sucker
Group: Red-Sided Minnow, Common Silverside,
Blunt Nosed Minnow
Haddock
Hake
Halibut
Herring, Sea
Kingfish
Lobster, American (Female)
Lobster, American (Male)
Mackerel, Common
Mackerel, Spanish
Mackerel, Yellow
Mascalonge
Maskalonge (shown on fly)
Menhaden
Moon-Eye
Perch, White
Perch, Yellow or Barred
Pickerel (from pond in Massachusetts)
Pickerel (from upper Hudson River)
Pickerel, Banded
Pike
Pike Perch or Wall-Eyed Pike
Pollack
Pompano
Pompano, Short
Red Horse
Red Snapper
Rose Fish
Salmon, Atlantic
Salmon, Landlocked (Female)
Salmon, Landlocked (Male)
Scup/Porgy
Shad
Shad, Hickory
Sheepshead
Shiner, Golden or Bream
Smelt
Spade Fish-Triple Tail
Steelhead or Salmon Trout
Sunfish
Sunfish, Blue Gill
Sunfish, Long Eared
Tautog
Trout, Albino Brook
Trout, Brook

Trout, Brook (Female)
Trout, Brook (Male)
Trout, Brown
Trout, Canadian Red (Female)
Trout, Canadian Red (Male)
Trout, Canadian Red (Young)
Trout, Lake
Trout, Rainbow
Trout, Redthroat Black Spotted or Rocky Mountain
Trout, Sunapee or American Saibling (Female)
Trout, Sunapee or American Saibling (Male)
Trout, Tahoe
Weak-Fish/Squeteague
Whitefish
Whitefish, Common (Female)
Whitefish, Common (Male)
Whiting

Classic Images has the largest selection of original turn-of-the-century Denton fish prints in the country. These prints are offered for sale matted and ready for framing, or loose for those persons desiring to custom-mat their prints. Individuals wishing to purchase a specific Denton image may call 203-834-0144 to confirm availability and price.

Classic Images has also reprinted four of the most popular Denton fish prints: "Brook Trout," "Brown Trout," "Striped Bass" and "Bluefish." The quality of these reprints is exquisite. Indeed, it is almost impossible to tell them apart from the antique chromolithographs. These "modern-day" Dentons fill the aesthetic and decorative needs of most people. They look every bit as lovely on the wall, and they make very special gifts for fishermen and art lovers alike. The price is \$47.50 each, matted, shrink-wrapped and ready for framing. (Quantity discounts available).

**CLASSIC IMAGES
76 Glenview
Wilton, CT 06897
(203) 834-0144
(203) 761-1479 Fax**

Dies in Wellesley



SHERMAN F. DENTON

SHERMAN DENTON, NATURALIST, DEAD

Victim of Heart Attack at
Wellesley Farms

Sherman Foote Denton, internationally known naturalist whose mounted fish are in every leading museum in this country, died yesterday of a heart attack at his home at Wellesley Farms. He was in his 81st year.

Mr. Denton, who began to paint and study fish when he was 3, was the only person in America supplying the demands of the Smithsonian Institution, the Field Museum in Chicago, Agassiz Museum at Harvard and other leading institutions with naturally colored fish from every corner of the globe. In his garret he had collected several thousand fish skins and as many papier mache bodies accompanied by water color sketches in the hope of being able to meet all orders from museums no matter how large or varied. Fish were sent to him from all over the world.

Inventor of a plaster mount for butterflies and the accepted method of mounting them on glass, he was also the owner of one of the most valuable collections of American fresh water pearls in the country, many of which he found. He is said to have taken a pearl valued at \$4000 from a stream near Dover a few years ago. He also collected precious stones which he cut.

He was born in Dayton, O., Sept. 24, 1856, son of William Denton, lecturer and geologist, and was a resident here more than 50 years.

He leaves a daughter, Mildred Denton; a sister, Miss Carrie Denton, and two brothers, Shelley W. of Wellesley and Winsford Denton of La Jolla, Calif. Private funeral services will be held at the home Saturday with burial in Woodlawn cemetery, Wellesley.

Boston Herald American

6.25.37

SKETCH OF THE LIFE OF SHELLEY WRIGHT DENTON

Shelley Wright Denton, the second son of Professor and Mrs. William Denton, was born in Middlefield, Ohio in 1859 and about 1864 came East with his parents, who after that date made their home in Wellesley, Massachusetts.

During his school years, and for the greater part of his life, he was an ardent collector of insects, (principally lepidoptera) bird skins, bird eggs, postage stamps, coins, Indian relics, and lastly, minerals and gem stones. A large portion of his collection of butterflies and moths (mostly local species) he later gave to Wellesley College.

In the spring of 1878 Professor Denton had his son Shelley leave school and learn to make photographs and lantern slides with which to illustrate the Denton lectures on geology and other subjects. After many weeks of struggling with all sorts of chemicals and material and with the help of a photographer in Natick, Shelley made enough slides to illustrate some of the lectures. He fixed up a dark room and spent part of each day at the work. Professor Denton gave courses of lectures, generally six in the course, and Shelley ran the lantern. They would be given for instance at Milford on Monday, Stoneham on Wednesday, and Friday at Rockland. This program would continue during the six weeks. This necessitated going by train and after each lecture packing the lantern, screen, and all the equipment connected with the lecture into a trunk and sending it to the next town. Shelley's duties were to engage a hall, if a new town, get the trunk taken to the hall, set up the screen, and make gas if no natural gas was in the building with which to run the lantern. He also distributed hand bills, had posters and tickets printed and so forth. He then took money at the door and ran the lantern to illustrate the talk. All of Shelley's spare time was spent in making lantern slides and collecting all sorts of natural history specimens. He traveled with his father for the greater part of four years all over the eastern and central portion of the United States; also through Canada, Nova Scotia and New Brunswick.

The summer of 1878, while with his father on a lecture tour, he spent his spare time collecting, walking many miles in Kansas, Wyoming and Colorado.

Of the fourteen trips he made to the Pacific coast his first visit to California was in 1880, when with his brother Sherman and another young man from Wellesley, he went on a collecting trip for bird skins for museums and private collectors here in the East. They left the train at Reno, Nevada, and walked one hundred and thirty miles south to Mono Lake, California where they collected for nearly a month. After many hardships they crossed the Sierra Nevada Mountains through deep snow and finally reached the Yosemite Valley.

The next year, 1881, he again went to California, and then by steamer to Australia accompanying his father on a lecture tour where nearly a year was spent in the various towns and cities of Victoria and New South Wales, including a visit to the then new gold fields at Temora.

In the early part of 1882 they crossed Bass Strait to Tasmania, where a month was spent. From Tasmania they took a steamer to New Zealand, landing at Invercargil. Later at Dunedin, they were joined by Sherman, the oldest Denton son. After spending nine months in the cities and towns in the middle and north islands they returned from Auckland by steamer to Australia. Again they traveled northward, stopping a month in Brisbane and also at each of the other towns along the coast of Queensland as far north as Thursday Island in Torres Straits. Professor Denton giving lectures during this time.

Here in 1883 they joined an exploring expedition to New Guinea sent out by the Melbourne Argus, a paper published in that city. Crossing the open sea between Thursday Island and New Guinea, they landed at the native village of Port Moresby. Making their way on foot back thirty-five miles from the coast, the two brothers, in order to collect, took up their stay in the native village of Narreanouma while their father continued on into the unexplored interior with Captain Armit and the other members of the expedition. For many weeks the brothers lived among the uncivilized natives. Meanwhile the expedition pushed on and after an absence from Narreanouma of several weeks, in which mountain ranges were crossed and hostile natives barred their advance, all were stricken with fever and the death of Professor Denton forced them to return.

The brothers brought out a large collection of insects, shells, ethnological specimens and bird skins. They reached home after an absence of three years.

Of the twenty-five hundred bird skins obtained on this trip by Mr. Denton, a part went to Wellesley College, the University Museum in Cambridge, Massachusetts, the National Museum Washington, the private collection of D. H. Talbot of Sioux City, Iowa, while the last six hundred and sixty went to the Carnegie Museum in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

Upon Mr. Denton's return from Australia and New Guinea in 1883 he met and later married Ella de Rochemont then living in Wellesley. A daughter Vanessa was born to them in 1886.

Shortly after his return he gave lectures on his travels in these countries. These lectures were given throughout New England and as far west as Ohio.

Following his lecture tours for nearly three years he worked lithographing and water coloring the plates illustrating Edward's book on North American Butterflies, one of the finest works of the kind ever published.

In 1887 he collected bird skins, bird eggs, insects, also seven hundred and fifty pounds of Indian relics near Franktown, Nevada for the Peabody Museum in Cambridge, Massachusetts.

After his return from the Pacific coast in 1887, he accepted the position as curator of the Brewster's Ornithological Museum in Cambridge, Massachusetts cataloging and arranging the forty-five thousand bird skins and the twenty-five thousand bird eggs in the museum.

His summer vacations of two months each year were devoted to hunting for fresh water pearls in the streams of New England and in the rivers of Wisconsin, Iowa, Missouri, Illinois, Indiana and Ohio.

Having taken out the English patent on a new method of mounting and preserving butterflies and moths, invented by his brother Sherman, he resigned his position with Mr. Brewster in the latter part of 1895.

In December of that year, he with his younger brother William, held an exhibit of mounted lepidoptera at the American Art Galleries, New York City, and a second exhibit at the same galleries in 1896. This latter year he went to Europe and placed butterflies on sale in many of the larger cities.

By the sinking of the S.S. Londonian he lost sixteen cases of goods including twenty-two thousand butterflies, and the moulds for making the plaster tablets. This necessitated his crossing and re-crossing the Atlantic several times. He finally returned to England with his family and rented a part of Henson's Gem store on Regent Street, London in 1899 and took up his residence in Thornton Heath. He continued business for seven years, during which time he supplied many collections for museums, and one collection of every butterfly and moth native to the British Isles for the then Prince of Wales on his thirteenth birthday.

In 1907, selling out his London business, he and his family returned to America for good.

In 1910 Mr. Denton opened and operated a gem store on Bromfield Street in Boston, Massa-

chusetts which he conducted until 1923 when, desiring more time for work on his many collections, he retired.

While in business in Boston he became interested in some opal mines in northwest Nevada. He spent a month during the summers of 1913 and 1917 at Virgin Valley where the claims were located. Camping in this alkali region, he found, after a great amount of hard labor, some fine opals.

During the summer of 1919 he took an auto trip to Tennessee with a man well informed on Indians, there to open graves and mounds to hunt for relics. Upon returning to Massachusetts they went to Maine to open the graves of the Red Paint Indians for remains and relics, some of which went into the Museum at Andover, Massachusetts.

To escape the cold weather in later years he spent several winters going south with a friend. Nassau was visited in 1924 where they bicycled over the greater part of the island seeing its beauties. In 1926 Jamaica was much enjoyed being quite tropical and mountainous. During their stay they traveled much, especially inland, and Mr. Denton rode horse back to the top of the highest peak, where Cuba can be seen ninety miles away.

After retiring, until 1929 he devoted his time to cutting and supplying a collection of gem stones for a private party. That same year, 1929, he was engaged to write a book on gems and ornamental stones. The manuscript was finished, after four and one half years labor, but never published for, while waiting for the colored plates to be completed, (of which there were to be one hundred) the party for whom the work was being done lost the greater part of her money, and shortly after passed away, at the age of ninety-nine years.

In the summer of 1929 he took a young man with him, and shipping the auto to Denver, Colorado, drove from there through the western states and back to Denver, a distance of seven thousand miles. On this trip he collected minerals and gems, many of which he later cut and polished.

One winter was spent in Mexico City and another in Guatemala City. In both of these countries he and his companion visited the Indian villages, the Pyramids, and other interesting places, learning the life of the people.

Several trips to the west coast were made with his family to enjoy the wonders of the Parks. Many summers they also toured every corner of New England, went to the Adirondack Mountains, New York State, the Gaspé Peninsula, Canada, and the Smoky Mountains, North Carolina.

A trip west was planned for the summer of 1938, but never materialized, as Mr. Denton passed away in April of that year.

The Townsman, Wellesley, Mass., Thursday, May 24, 1956.

The Denton Family, Father And Sons, All Followed Careers As Naturalists

When William Denton built his home in this town in 1887, the place was sparsely settled and he provided the real country life he desired for his children. Miss Carrie Denton, who continues to reside at the family home at 11 Denton road, often joined her four brothers in their exploration of field and wood, rock and river, during which they collected every kind of specimen imaginable. Miss Denton recalls that her father inspired the children with a tenacious curiosity about the world and the creatures and objects in it, and it is no wonder that they became naturalists in the truest sense of that word.

The two older boys, William and Robert Winsford, accompanied their father on many of his lecture tours, which gave them an opportunity (unusual at that time) to see the United States and learn much that was not included in their school books. In 1874 Sherman went with Mr. Denton on an extended trip to the Pacific coast, where lecture engagements kept them for eight months. While there they explored the Yosemite Valley and the wilds beyond the Sierras. Again in 1880 Mr. Denton induced Shelley and a friend Herbert Lovewell, to accompany him back to that region to study the wild bird life.

In 1881 the year Wellesley was incorporated) Mr. Denton was engaged to give a course of lectures in Australia. He was accompanied by Shelley, then 21, who was to assist with the stere-

opticon, and they were joined by Sherman in New Zealand the following year. In 1883 Mr. Denton and the boys participated in an expedition sent out by a newspaper in Melbourne to explore the wilds of New Guinea. Shelley and Sherman were left on the coast while their father went inland where no white man had ever set foot. Their first world of Mr. Denton was that he had died of jungle fever, with which the entire party was stricken some 15 miles inland.

Shelley and Sherman did not continue around the world, as originally planned, but came directly home to Wellesley after a long wait in Australia for a steamer. Naturally many adjustments followed this catastrophe in the Denton family. Miss Carrie left Dana Hall to assist her mother at home. William and Robert Winsford got out the small press on which they used to print their father's lectures and obtained considerable work and talent as an artist, did a number of crayon portraits for persons in Wellesley and Boston. Shelley obtained a position in Cambridge in charge of the private museum of William Brewster, a Boston banker who had a marvelous collection of bird skins and eggs.

Won World Acclaim
The world-famous butterfly collection which originated in Wellesley some 50 years ago through the four Denton brothers is still housed in the Denton

family home at 11 Denton road, where their sister, Miss Carrie D. Denton, still resides.

William and Winsford Denton as young men gathered a great many local butterflies and sold them to collectors. In 1894 they spent the summer in Colombia, South America, collecting a vast number of the brilliant blue Morphos. They mounted a great many of these, using the method patented by their brother Sherman, also a naturalist. At the suggestion of a friend, they exhibited their splendid collection at the Grundman Studios in Boston, a well-known gathering place for artists. The exhibition caused a sensation, and was widely publicized in the newspapers. The Boston Herald stating, "No flies on the butterfly show."

William Shelley took 500 specimens to New York City and exhibited them at the American Art Galleries, selling duplicates. The entire collection was finally purchased by C. P. Huntington, a railroad magnate who installed the butterflies as a freeze in the dining room of his fabulous yacht. William and Winsford Denton formed a partnership and took a collection to Philadelphia, where it was shown in the finest art gallery of that city. They developed a series of exhibitions in the larger cities East of the Mississippi which became popular annual affairs.

In 1900 the Denton Brothers partners sent their collection of butterflies to the International Exposition in Paris, with their sister, Carrie, assisting in their showing. Proudly she brought back both the gold and silver medals awarded not alone for the range and perfection of the specimens, but also for their educational value. Following this world-wide acclaim, William and Winsford specialized in making butterfly jewelry, and continued this work until William's death in 1923. Winsford, now the only

brother living, makes his home in California.

The second of the four Denton brothers to pass away was Sherman of Glen road, who, though he was an all-round naturalist, specialized in mounting fish for museums and in the collection and study of pearls. In 1900 he published a de luxe two-volume limited edition of "Moths and Butterflies of the United States East of the Rocky Mountains." Following his death here in 1937 his daughter, Miss Mildred Denton, has made her home with Miss Carrie Denton at 11 Denton road.

A large volume entitled "Pages From a Naturalist's Diary," from the diaries of Shelley Wright Denton, who died in 1938, were arranged and published by his daughter, Miss Vanessa Denton of 24 Denton road, in 1949.

Murrells of Nature
Although it is impossible to describe the extent and beauty of the butterflies in Miss Carrie Denton's collection, we can include a few of the facts she has given us about them. The genus Ornithoptera (bird-winged) comprises large and strikingly beautiful butterflies found only in the East Indies. From Batahan, an island of the Molucca group, comes O. Priamus with bright yellow body, the fore wings deep black with two side bands of

brilliant green. Hind wings are all green, except for a curved band of four black spots. The female of this species is larger and has none of the green coloring, being black with patches and with bars of white shading to brown.

Ornithoptera brookiana, from Borneo, is not so large but equally fine. Both wings are black and on each is a broad band of brilliant green spear-shaped marks. The morphos, brilliant all-blue iridescent butterflies, found only in South America are considered by many the most beautiful insects known.

Some insects with quieter colorings are very interesting in shape and markings. The '88' and '89' butterflies from South America, for instance, carry on the underside of their wings the above figures in black, outlined on a grey background (the front wings red with black band). The "Shaw" butterflies of India have patterns and coloring which so closely resemble the well-known Indian and Chinese shawls that it is supposed that natives of that country copy these insect designs when weaving their material! One of the most remarkable examples of the protective coloring in nature is the "Dead Leaf Butterfly" from India, the underside of which is like a dead and worn leaf.