



# *The* **Blacker** *Trilogy*

*The extraordinary story of a man, a book, and the salmon fly.*

William Blacker became famous when, in 1843, he published *Art of Angling* - a Pandora's box of a book which contained a hundred detailed salmon fly patterns - doubling the number of such flies that were known in print. A large proportion of these were examples of a new and exciting class of salmon fly, tied with exotic materials in what was becoming known as the 'Irish style'. For the hordes of fishermen who flocked to Blacker's Dean Street shop, these flies were the secret weapons of the future. Blacker was the only man in London who had adequate reserves of the rare feathers needed to tie the new flies in quantity, and as a result, they were very, very expensive.

It wasn't long before rivals sprang up, but this only served to highlight another of Blacker's unique qualities, which was that he tied all of his salmon flies himself, and his fame spread so widely that his customers included royalty. Blacker's patterns were endlessly inventive, each of the periodic changes in his style creating a new trend for others to follow.

Blacker is famous because he did more than anyone else to introduce Britain to the mixed wing salmon fly, but he was also a cutting-edge trout fisherman, who tied the first detached body mayflies. Blacker also designed the first emerger, a pattern called the Winged Larva, which was so far ahead of its time that Blacker routinely used it to catch salmon on the surface in the 1840s, a century before dry fly fishing for salmon was popularised in America. No one, before or after, would advance the cause of salmon fishing so far, or so fast, as the amazing Mr Blacker.

## Volume 1

### Blacker, Ephemera & Bell's Life

*Large format 340 x 245mm - approx 336 pages - hardback with slipcase.  
Fully illustrated in colour, with photographs of rare Blacker flies and materials.*

William Blacker lead a dramatic life, which this volume sets against the background of the extraordinary times in which he lived. Blacker emigrated from Ireland to settle at 54 Dean Street in London's Soho. It was from this shop that Blacker published his books *Art of Angling* and *Art of Fly Making*. Although the *Art of Angling* is the lesser known of the two, it is the most important, because it is the only book which has ever doubled the number of salmon flies in print and it introduced no less than seven of the core feathers used in classic salmon fly dressing.

Blacker's story could not be told without introducing Edward Fitzgibbon, better known as 'Ephemera'. Fitzgibbon, the first angling columnist, and one of the most colourful characters in the entire history of angling, learned about salmon flies and salmon fishing from Blacker and used the experience he gained to publish two of the most successful books on fishing ever printed. He repaid the favour with frequent mentions of Blacker in his *Bell's Life* column, which was read by anglers throughout the land.

Other characters include the rascally Frederic Tolfrey, journalist; Sir Hyde Parker, pioneer of Norwegian salmon fishing; James Jones, alcoholic tackle dealer extraordinaire; and the wealthy, but erratic A.F. Thistlethwayte, a salmon fisherman who was wont to summon his servants by firing a pistol at the ceiling.



## Volume 2

### Blacker - The 1842 and 1843 Editions

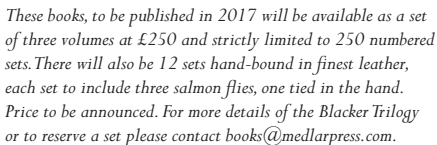
*Large format 340 x 245mm - approx 480 pages - hardback with slipcase.  
Fully illustrated in colour, with photographs of rare Blacker materials, including  
complete photographic surveys of key Art of Angling editions.*

This volume contains a detailed analysis of every issue of the scarce 1842 and 1843 Blacker *Art of Angling* editions, illustrated with complete photographic surveys of every major binding group. The text provides a full account of the books held in the Dietrich-Troeltsch collection, which includes many copies with trout, salmon and sea-trout flies tipped-in by William Blacker, as well as specimen feathers, hooks and other adornments, including fly dressing steps illustrated with actual flies. Volume 2 also includes details of copies held in other private collections and libraries, the whole amounting to a comprehensive survey of the evolution of Blacker's complex little book, which is presented for the first time in its correct sequence.

Volume 2 is the only practical method for anglers and historians to access the different issues of Blacker's 1842 and 1843 editions, all of which are rare and avidly collected. Armed with the keys provided in the text, confident and precise identification of any Blacker copy becomes a simple matter and Volume 2 will be eagerly sought by collectors, auctioneers, booksellers and bibliophiles alike.

Volume 3 lists every fly that William Blacker printed in the 1842 and 1843 editions of the *Art of Angling*, together with Blacker patterns quoted by other authors, including Edward Fitzgibbon, Frederic Tolfrey, Francis Francis, and in *Bell's Life*. The original dressing for each pattern is given, together with a modern interpretation of the tying instructions - in many cases, this is the first time that the dressings have been listed in 150 years and this volume will provide fly dressers with an invaluable resource for tying these hugely influential patterns. Many of the flies are illustrated.

*Sample pages from the Trilogy.*



## Blacker - The Team

### *Hermann Dietrich-Troeltsch*

Hermann Dietrich-Troeltsch was born in 1939 in Freiburg in Germany. His father Ernst was a successful racing driver who published Germany's first post-war automobile magazine. Both of Hermann's grandfathers were well-known in pre-1933 Germany; Ernst Troeltsch (1865-1923) was a prominent Protestant theologian whose works remain influential even today. After his early death, Troeltsch's wife Martha married the liberal politician Hermann Dietrich. Dietrich adopted Ernst Jr. and his children and took the family to the Black Forest during World War II. It was here that Hermann became acquainted with hunting and fishing. He graduated with a degree in economics and when his father died unexpectedly, took over his business interests in the Motor Presse Stuttgart group.

### *Andrew Herd*

Andrew Herd trained to become a fishing bum from the age of six, but made a mess of his career path and had to become a physician instead, qualifying at the Middlesex Hospital, London, in 1982. He works three days a week as a General Practitioner in County Durham. The remainder of the time he fishes, writes about fishing, or takes photographs of other people fishing, notably for Pure Fishing, for whom he has acted as a consultant for a number of years. Andrew is a consultant to the Oxford English Dictionary and has published many books, including his *History of Fly Fishing* trilogy, published by the Medlar Press, as well as being the executive editor of *Waterlog* magazine. His most recent work is *The Anglers' Bible*, a detailed examination of the Hardy Anglers' Guides up to 1914.

### *Alberto Calzolari*

Alberto's love for the art of fly tying led him to become an accomplished salmon fly dresser. Born in 1964 in the ancient town of Bologna, Alberto is an internationally known fly tier, lecturer and columnist. He started fly fishing when he was very young and many of his flies are now in museums or private collections. For years he has been the Italian correspondent for the Castabout Bulletin of the Catskill Fly Fishing Center in USA. Alberto's first book *Italian Deeds and Misdeeds* is about human nature, fellow fly fishermen and amusing tales of fishing with the fly. Although Alberto would prefer to call himself a storyteller instead of writer, he divides his time between researching and tying classic flies, writing, lecturing, binding and collecting books, and surfing - age permitting and not necessarily in that order. He lives in the Bologna countryside with his wife Federica, two children and a patient golden retriever, all of whom are very understanding of his countless passions.

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