

Appendix 85

Excerpts from the Kalispell Inter Lake – 1890-1906

E1 - JANUARY 3, 1890 (1ST Edition -1st paper) -

Demersville's Day - The Metropolis of the Flathead - The Sportsmen's Eden
(Special Correspondence to the Helena Journal, Dec. 16, 1886)

“At the end of the trout season we naturally look back through the pages of the diary to see what we have done. That leads to further going back, and proves that as the years have gone by our trout fishing has been gradually but surely deteriorating. This may be partly attributed to the angler not keeping pace with the times, that is to say, in not exercising more trouble and patience in order to meet the ever increasing shyness of trout in popular waters. But more often and especially in Montana, the fact may be attributed to the scarcity of this game popular fish, that seem to have congregated in large schools of untold thousands in the beautiful Flathead River. But a few days ago a party of four from this place were out but a short time on the river, and not withstanding the fact that the day was raw and cold, some returned with over 200 pounds of fine salmon trout. Among the party was Dr. J. W. Sanders, who has but recently located here to pursue the practice of his profession. The doctor is not only an expert angler but a master musician and had only cast his line in a few select places, when it instantly seized by a monster salmon trout that after several efforts he failed to land. He then thought of his tuning fork which he took from his pocket and by striking on the reel adjusted to his rod caused a telephonic communication with the fish that instantly quieted its nerves and enabled him to land a twenty-pounder.”

E4 - 7/12/95

“Whitefish Lake seems to be the favorite fishing place just at present. The big trout have their biting clothes on up there and tackle everything that touches the top of the water.”

E5 - 9/15/96

“The party of gentlemen from Dubuque, Iowa who went out with E. Rackowitz a month ago.... returned to Kalispell Friday night. They made their camp on Gordon Creek, a branch of the south fork of the Flathead.....Fish, Mr. Rackowitz says, were so plenty in the streams that it was no sport to catch them. The pools were alive with fat trout weighing from a pound to three pounds, and there were brook trout by the million.”

E7 - 5/27/98

“The salmon trout are reported plenty at the mouth of the Big Fork and some fine catches have been made recently by trolling. The fish are not of the largest size, running only from 8 to 12 pounds, but there is lots of “go” in them.”

E9 - 9/9/98

“A. McArthur and B.W.S. Folk spent three days on the river between Belton and the steel bridge, fishing. They caught a good many fish, though the fishing is not good just now, anywhere on the river.”

E10 - 10/28/98

“Whitefish have been caught in the different streams the past two weeks by thousands. A good many people have salted away a winter’s supply of them, and you will find many people who think they like them as well as trout - but they don’t.”

E11 - 4/21/99

“The fish are on their way up the streams, and the spring fishing is at its best. A good many fish have been taken at the dam at Lebert & Burns’ mill on the Stillwater, and some in the Flathead. As usual, however, the best fishing is to be had in the Big Fork, from which hundreds of fish have been taken in the past week. If you wish a good day’s fishing that is the place to get it, and if you wish to be sure of it, it should be within the next week.”

E12 - 11/3/99

“Thousands upon thousands of whitefish have been taken out of the Stillwater at Lebert and Burn’s mill. Notices were posted prohibiting fishing there, but it was found that it required too much time to chase the fishermen away, and it was given up. The fish are being taken from the other streams also, and it is said that the rapids in the Big Fork have been lined with fishermen for several weeks, and no end of fish have been taken.”

E13 - 3/15/01

“The early first run of trout up the streams is reported to have started, though as yet the fish are few in numbers.”

E14 - 4/5/01

“The fishing season is on, and long strings of men with cane poles are haunting the banks of the Stillwater every day. The run of fish is just commencing nicely, though the fish are not very numerous yet.”

E15 - 5/10/01

“Twenty-five fisherman - - two fish. That’s about the average daily record at the Stillwater dam during the high water the past week.”

E16 - 4/17/03

“The spring run of fish have got as far up the Stillwater as the dam at the Northwestern mill, and there are so many fishermen that the fish poles make the banks look like a canebrake.”

E17 - 9/18/03

“The whitefish are on their annual pilgrimage up the streams, and are being taken at the dam at the Northwestern Lumber Co.’s mill in large numbers.”

E18 - 2/5/04

“The fishing is good at intervals in the sloughs along the Flathead, and on some days a good many are being caught.”

E19 - 3/18/04

“The slight rise in the rivers following last week’s thaw started the trout up the streams. A few are being caught in the Stillwater as far up as the dam at the Northwestern Lumber Co’s. mill, and in the lower rivers good catches are occasionally (sic) made.”

E20 - 4/15/04

“The fishermen who occupy every available spot around the dam at the Northwestern mill from daylight to drak (sic), are catching lots of fine trout. Some exceptionally fine strings have been brought in today.”

E21 - 3/10/05

“The fishermen are industriously sinking bait into the streams to entice the few fish that are already making their way toward the headwaters. They are not making very big catches.”

E22 - 4/14/05

“Fishing has been unusually good the past ten days, and some big catches are reported. W.C. Lyman and Ham Lee brought in 56 big trout from Ashley Lake, and David Ross dragged out 51 from a bay on the east shore of Flathead lake in a couple of hours. Hundreds have been caught at the Stillwater dam, and the fishermen who have been haunting the banks of the Flathead bring in full baskets.”

E23 - 4/28/05

“The recent rise of the river is good for the saw mills but hard on the fishermen. The water is too riley to fish with much success.”

E24 - 9/29/05

“The fall run of whitefish has begun, and a large number are being taken at the Northwestern Lumber Co’s. dam and in the stretches below in the Stillwater. The fishermen are taking them with bait, for the fish are not yet coming in sufficient numbers to get many by drawing a bare hook through the pools, as can be done later.

E25 - 3/30/06

“The run of fish is beginning, and the fishing season is on. Occasionally good catches are made, but so far there is little doing at the dam at the Northwestern mill, where the banks are usually lined with fishermen in the spring.”

E26 - 10/26/06

“The whitefish are on their fall run up the rivers, and the fishermen are taking them literally by thousands. In previous years whitefish catching has been done chiefly on the “grab hook” plan, or of later years, since the law has been more strictly enforced against that practice, with a hook and line, drawing the hook through the water until it encountered the fish, and throwing him out on the bank. The game warden has frowned on that practice also, and the fishermen are catching them with bait. The best lure for them seems to be some particularly squirmy insects that are taken in large numbers along Spring Creek, and similar streams. If the fisherman does not catch all he can carry home he complains of his poor luck.”