

THE ENGLISH LAKE DISTRICT FISHERIES

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The English Lake district fisheries by John Watson

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JOHN WATSON

**THE ENGLISH LAKE
DISTRICT FISHERIES**

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ENGLISH LAKE
DISTRICT FISHERIES

BY
JOHN WATSON, F.L.S.

AUTHOR OF "SYLVAN FOLK," "NATURE AND WOODCRAFT,"
"POACHERS AND POACHING," ETC., ETC.

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PREFACE

MY apology for offering this work to the public is that the Editors of the Angler's Library have kindly asked me to write it ; and because all my life I have been specially interested in the Fisheries of the Lake District. This magnificent system of lakes, tarns, and rivers, now constitute fisheries mainly in a potential sense only ; for there is not the slightest comparison between the sport or food-supply they yield to-day with what they might—and will—yield in the not distant future. A few years ago fish-culture and the management of fisheries were in their infancy ; but of late the knowledge of the subject has made enormous strides. Once the results of systematic re-stocking are seen, the cultivation of water will be looked upon far differently to what it is to-day. There is probably no like area in the whole of Great Britain which has so many natural advantages in this respect as the English Lake District, but as yet these advantages have been but little realised.

If the present volume but arouses an intelligent consideration of the question by those most nearly

concerned it will have served a useful end. I am quite aware of the difficulties in the way—no one more so—but none of these difficulties are insurmountable; and I am confident that the future will show a revolution in regard to the whole subject.

The area treated of in the present volume is, comparatively, a large one, and but little has been written of it in this connection of a sustained nature. *Salmonia* and *The Angler in the Lake District* are both charming works, but delightfully vague as to the actualities of the subject. The *Salmonidæ of Westmorland*, by the late G. F. Braithwaite, contains a good deal that is pleasant and suggestive; but the reminiscences of the author form the more valuable portion of his little book. There have been, of course, a great many contributions to the subject in the columns of the *Field* and other newspapers; but altogether the literature of the subject is scant. Reference may be made to a paper on the "British Charrs" in the *Transactions* of the Zoological Society, by Dr. Günther, in which occurs an extended reference to the Windermere Char.

If, therefore, there is but little material to build upon, this volume may be looked upon less critically than otherwise it might be. At worst it may form the foundation for the work of some future angler historian. I hope, however, that what is set down may be found at least suggestive, and of a fairly practical nature. To ensure partly the latter

element I have revisited and fished almost every lake and river of the district, not omitting the almost innumerable mountain tarns.

To the following gentlemen I must own my indebtedness for information upon matters of which they have special knowledge:—Dr. Fawcitt, of Broughton; Mr. S. Taylor, of Haverthwaite; Mr. W. Harrison of Skelwith; Mr. Arthur Severn, of Coniston; Mr. F. M. T. Jones-Balme, of Langdale; Captain Ormrod, of Wyresdale Park; Captain Bagot, M.P., of Levens; and for special contributions, to Mr. J. B. Slater, of Carlisle; and Mr. G. E. Lowthian, of Keswick.

JOHN WATSON

THORNY HILLS KENDAL,
1899.

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