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Introduction

I spent over thirty years of my life working in a factory, the money was handy and the banter with my colleagues was most enjoyable, but every day without exception I yearned to be on the riverbank. Eventually after a period of wishful thinking the inevitable sword of redundancy swung my way, and I vowed that once I was out of that factory I would never work in another.

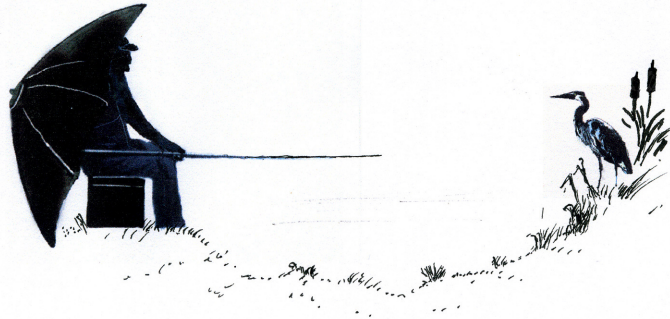
With this in mind I retrained as a freelance writer and now I have been able to achieve one of my life's ambitions, to write a book about angling. The volume you are holding is the result of my endeavours. It has been put together over a number of years and arranged in a way that hopefully you will find helpful and entertaining.

It is essentially a book of two parts. The first is all about passing on tips to improve catch rates and therefore the angling experience. I make no claim to being the originator of any of these tips; some are common sense, while others have been passed down over the years. However, my observations are unique to me, and are used hopefully to verify the validity of each tip.

The second part of the book is all about tales; stories of incidents that happened to me in the real angling world. I am not a celebrity and don't have access to private waters, in fact I am just a "normal angler" who has had some success in local matches. But fishing isn't all about competitions; I've had some of the best times of my life while taking part in pleasure sessions with good mates for company. I've also spent hundreds of hours in our beautiful countryside and I feel privileged to have witnessed mother nature doing her stuff. I hope that you can relate to the stories within and expect that many of you will have similar stories to tell, but these are mine and at last I have committed them to paper.

So whether you are a seasoned piscatorial engineer or just a lad who likes to dip his rod now and again, I hope you find the tips in this book useful and most of all, that you enjoy reading it.

*Great anglers exist
Side by side
One fishes for pleasure
The other to survive*



(Below you will find the part of a sample chapter)

Don't upset the boaters

Boaters and anglers don't get on like a house on fire and that's a fact. This is a shame really because all it would take is a bit of understanding and we could all co-exist quite well.

I know boaters are keen on pointing out that if it wasn't for boats there would be no canals in the first place. But it is also true that if it wasn't for the revenue provided by anglers, a lot more of them would have been filled in by now and the only pleasure the boater would get would be in eating the spuds that had been grown over the top of them.

But it isn't just the canals where tempers can be lost. I saw a very bad case of river rage once on the mighty Severn. This is surprising really because it's a wide piece of water and you'd think there would be enough room for anglers and boaters to live happily together.

The incident happened opposite me on the other bank so I was what the police would call a first class witness. The fracas was between an angler and a man in a speedboat, and I guess if I had to apportion blame then the boater would get it. I'm not being biased you understand, I saw what I saw governor, and that's that.

The trouble erupted when the speedboat went passed the angler pretty close to the bank causing the angler to shout at the driver.

“You've got the whole pissing river to bugger about on knob-head, why can't you stay out of my swim?”

He shouted it so loud I could hear him across the river, but even so, I expected the speedboater to just carry on his way, but he didn't, he cut his engine down to idle and let the current drift him back down to the angler.

“Would you mind repeating that?” he asked the fisherman in a clear posh tone.

“I said, you ought to stick to the middle instead of ruining my swim.”

Now I think you'd have to agree that the angler's language was good considering he had a speedboat hovering over his swim, and the driver was revving the engine to keep the boat stationary in the current.

“I'll go where I damn choose and there's nothing you can do about it,” he replied, with a haughty laugh.

“Oh yeah, that's what you think, I'll fix you for ruining my day's fishing,” and with that remark, he catapulted a huge pouch full of maggots into the speedboat.

“Bastard,” the boater cried, then put the rudder hard over as he opened the throttle. The result was a whirlpool in the angler's swim that was so intense and so deep I could almost see the bottom. He did this for a couple of minutes then was gone up the river, I could still hear him laughing as he went round the next bend.

The moral of the story is this; boaters have the best weapons at their disposal, it's a bit like trying to fight a battle with sticks and stones when your opponent has got an AK47. You are better off making friends with him and trying to get him to see your side of things. Beyond that you can always hope that he sinks in the next lock.
