



Small Trout Fly Fishing Reel, Walter Dingley

Sold



REF: 30212

Depth: 2.6 cm (1")

Diameter: 7 cm (2.8")

Description

Walter Dingley 2¾" Alloy Trout Fly Reel.

A small alloy five pillar centerpin, revolving plate, trout fly reel by Walter Dingley. Fitted with a single white handle, smooth constant check and full length brass foot. The reel with the looks of a Hardy Brothers reel retaining most of its original factory lead finish, stamped internally with a 'D' denoting Walter Dingley, who unsurprisingly worked for Hardy's for nineteen years.

Shown depth of the reel is 2.6 cm without the handle, handle is an extra 1.7 cm.

Adapted from John Drewett's book 'Hardy Brothers, The Masters The Men & Their Reels.

William Henry Dingley, or Walter as he was known to many of those with whom he worked, was born on the 6th January, 1858, in West Bromwich, a suburb of Birmingham. At the age of fourteen Walter was apprenticed to the firm of Reuben Heaton of Birmingham, which at that time was one, if not the largest manufacturer of fishing reels in England. He stayed with Heaton's for fourteen years before moving to the highly respected reelmaker, David Slater, who had commenced manufacturing fishing reels at Newark-upon-Trent, Nottinghamshire in 1879. The next five years during his stay with Slater proved to be extremely formative as Slater was a past master when it came to casting with a Nottingham reel. In 1891 Walter moved to Alnwick to take up employment with the rapidly expanding firm of Hardy Brothers.

Dingley turned to one of Slater's expired patents when endeavouring to solve production problems relating to line guards on the early Hardy 'Silex' reels. Walter was not just a first class craftsman but industrious too, as the large number of reels bearing the letter 'D' will testify, but it is the 'Silex' with its revolutionary braking system that will remain forever as a tribute to Walter Dingley's inventiveness.

He remained at Hardy's for some nineteen years, but left around 1911 after what is thought to have been a disagreement over patent rights. It is thought he found employment with J.J.S. Walker & Co. as he is listed in their circa 1913 catalogue as being head of the reelmaking department. When he left J.J.S. Walker & Co. is uncertain but it is thought that it was in around 1920's he started to make his own reels for the trade.

Walter's production soon expanded to include a range of fly reels which he made for various firms within the tackle trade. It is no coincidence that Dingley reels have that Hardy look of quality about them as most of the reel makers he recruited would have been ex-Hardy men. It would seem that from the start of going in to business on his own, Dingley produced reels mainly for the trade. It may not have been his initial intention but came about as Hardy's were known to have applied pressure to local papers, etc. not to take his advertisements and also to mutual suppliers not to supply.

His reels can be found with a variety of firms' names on them, but an inspection inside the reel will usually reveal a large letter 'D' stamped inside the backplate, subtly proclaiming whose firm manufactured the reel. William Henry Dingley died on the 27th January, 1946, at the grand old age of 88.