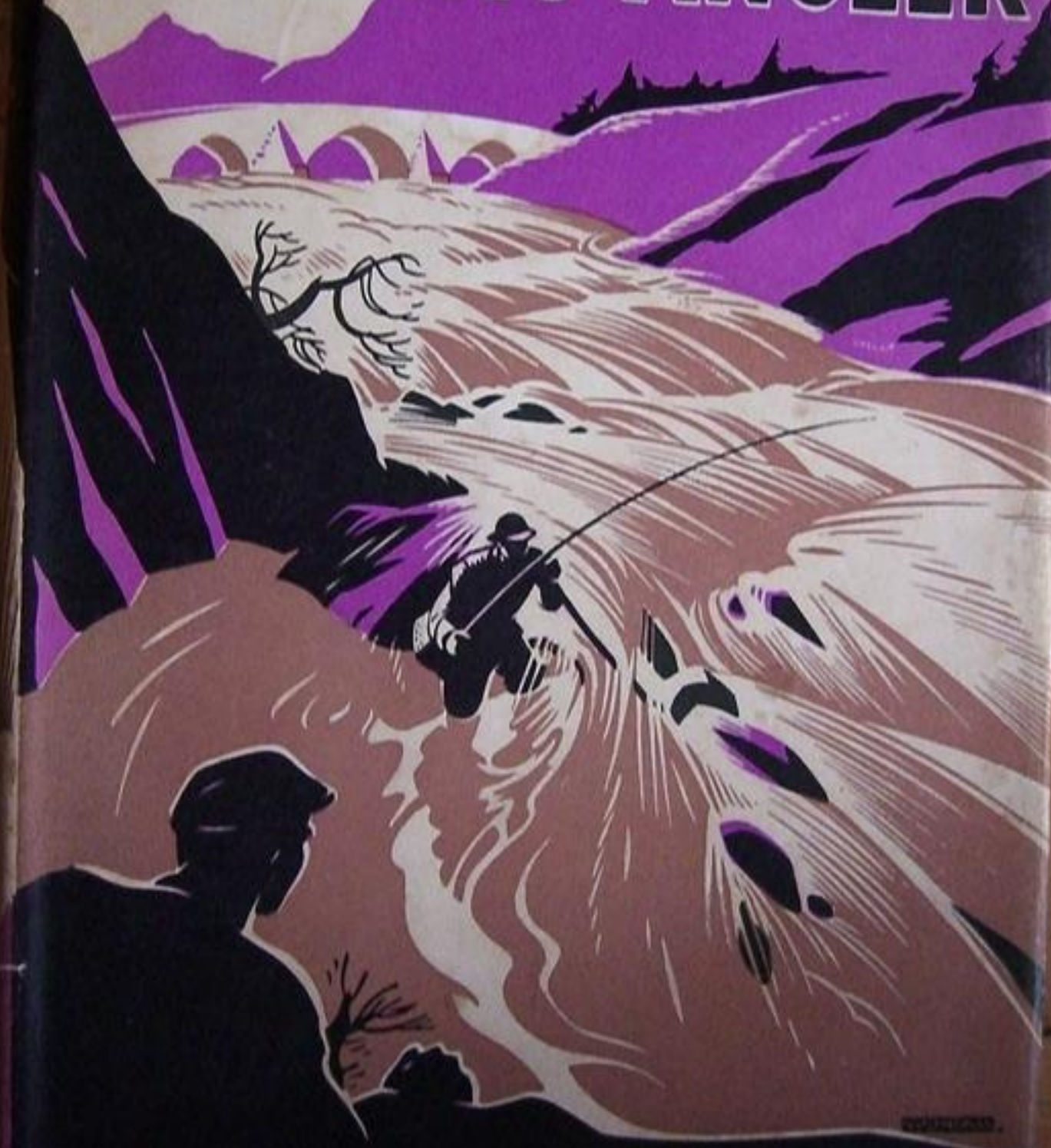


The Adventures of a
SPORTING ANGLER



V. CARRON WELLINGTON

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F.Z.S., F.S.A.Scot.

OLIVER AND BOYD

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DEDICATED TO
MOTHER NATURE

her
Beloved Sons and Daughters
of The Mountains and The Mist
and all
who cast angle beside them

'Go, little booke; God send thee good passage,
And especially let this be thy prayere
Unto them all that thee will read or hear,
Where thou art wrong after their help to call,
Thee to correct in any part or all.'

—CHAUCER

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I am indeed happy to associate the following friends with the production of this book.

Miss Margaret Moffatt Brown, LL.B., Lecturer on Roman Law, Birmingham, for typing my manuscript so meticulously neat and accurate. Also for permission to include her personal tribute to Suilven on page 163.

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Mrs Cecil H. Colquhoun, proprietrix of the Colquhoun Arms Hotel, Luss, for the honour to include a picture of her deceased husband, Sinclair. Plate II.

Major Gavin Maxwell, for his recording of the end of such a grand fight off Soay Island. Plate V.

John Rae, Stirling, whose camera made a timely recording of the catches portrayed on plates X and XIII.

Frank H. Cameron, Esq., Glasgow, whose timely visit caught the shark in Achmelvich Bay. Plate V.

Douglas G. Russell, Esq., The Scottish Tourist Board, Edinburgh. Plate I.

Thos. White, Esq., J. B. White & Co., Dundee. Plate VIII (top).

Messrs Valentine & Son, Dundee. Plates III, IV (bottom), VI.

The remainder of the photographs are by the author.

PREFACE

THESE reminiscences of a lifelong, carefree, and intimate association with angling environments in the Scottish and Welsh Highlands will, it is hoped, have as much interest for those who have not as yet trod the heather, as for those who are familiar with the wild and entrancing tracks that lead to mountain rivers and lochs.

Although many readers who revel in the carefree pleasures of hill-walking may be indifferent to the combined joys of angling, there are few who do not appreciate the wild scenic grandeur, and beauty of these majestic, awe-inspiring, and sea-tangled Highland retreats into which the peripatetic angler is lured.

The whole environment of the Highland country offer far more than even a native can observe and absorb during the period of his natural life. It is not, therefore, the prerogative of mortal man to attempt a detailed description of such inimitable and impressive grandeur, which saturates even the most troubled heart with a reassuring sense of quietude, of peace, of contentment, and unutterable thoughts in their praise.

I do not therefore make any pretence to describe the scenes of my adventures and experiences, except in the natural manner of their being, and their happening. If it may seem that the following narratives portray me as a peripatetic angler always looking for trouble, then let me assure you, that I seek no more than my native intelligence and lifelong familiarity with nature's moods enable me to contend with. What may appear reckless and dangerous to the uninitiated visitor, is natural enough to the native

in his homeland playground, even though he may long be exiled.

I have purposely refrained from any reference to those countless happy days of full and empty creels in peaceful haunts and waters. Such days have been commonplace throughout the long years in the lives of many anglers, and bookshelves have for long been creaking under the weighty volumes of such happy reminiscences. By way of a change, I have chosen to narrate only the adventurous ones throughout the pages of this book. What, after all, is life without adventure?

There is much more to enjoy in a fishing expedition than merely making of it a task of catching fish, even when one has to pay exorbitant prices for the privilege, and to some extent I have endeavoured to enlighten the reader with a glimpse of the observant angler's alternative interests and pleasures, and as to what can happen to a curious-minded person when he concerns himself with the private lives of Mother Nature and her natural offsprings.

The amenities of these quiet hills of home in the Highlands are not conducive to the pleasures of those in search of worldly, crowd-appealing, exotic forms of entertainment, and it is only fair to advise those who expect it to seek elsewhere. I can sympathize with a blindness that sees nothing more in the grandeur of a majestic mountain than a 'slab of rock'; in the enchanting beauty of a Highland loch, no more than a 'sheet of water'. Mother Nature is natural simplicity personified, despite her greatness and inimitable powers, and can only be intelligibly absorbed when the heart and mind are completely relaxed. Relaxation comes naturally in her august and revered presence.

If you are a nature lover, I commend you to keep close to the angler's haunts in any country, for none are so privileged to see the natural beauty of the world as he.

I assure you that nowhere will you find it so varied and attractive as amongst the quiet hills, and particularly those of Wester Ross, Sutherland, and the North Welsh Highlands.

I find the writing of a book a much easier task than deciding on a title for it, and I am obliged to my friends for their choice.

V. CARRON WELLINGTON

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