

Leonard Halladay



Leonard Halladay (1872-1952) was originally from New York but migrated to the small lumbering town of Mayfield, Michigan (south of Traverse City) when Len was just a young boy.

Around the turn of the century Leonard and his wife Rilla ran the Mayfield Hotel which at the time provided room and food for the lumberjacks in the area.

As the logging industry faded, the Boardman River was rapidly beginning to attract large numbers of fishermen from the surrounding states. Len started a guide and livery service catering to them. It didn't take long before Leonard started tying flies for his clientele with hackle he acquired from his own chickens.

Mr. Halladay tied the first Adams fly in 1922 at his house on Mayfield Pond in Mayfield. As the story goes, his friend Judge Charles F. Adams of Lorain, Ohio, saw an insect that interested him and brought it to Halladay and asked him to tie up an imitation. Judge Adams fished the fly on the Boardman River and returned to Halladay bragging up how successful he was with the fly that Halladay tied. Halladay then named it the "Adams" after the Judge since he had such great success with it.

Leonard Halladay's Adams fly is not only the most popular fly in North American but is carried in most fly boxes around the world. More trout have been caught on this pattern than any other. The original Adams was tied with a tail of two Golden Pheasant Tippetts (seen as late as 1962), and was probably tied spent wing.

Leonard Halladay has several other very successful patterns that are attributed to him; including the Halladay's Hair Stone, the Dr. Kirgin and the Halladay's Michigan Caddis.

Tom Deschaine
~Westland, Mi.~